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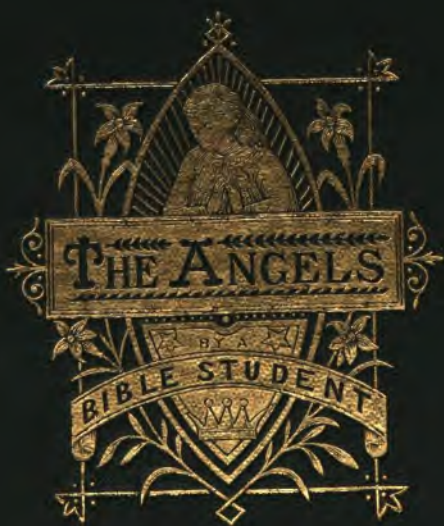
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# THE ANGELS



**TO**  
**FREDERICK PIERCY,**  
**AS COMMEMORATING**  
**OUR TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR**  
**OF INTIMATE, TENDER, AND UNVARYING**  
**FRIENDSHIP,**  
**I LOVINGLY DEDICATE**  
**THIS BOOK.**



**TO**  
**FREDERICK PIERCY,**  
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## PREFACE.

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I HAVE been assured by some, in whose judgment I confide, that the following work might be mistakenly regarded as advancing a claim on the part of its author to communication with spirits in the spiritual world. In order to prevent such a misconception, I beg to explain, at the outset, that the narrative is intended simply as an allegory; and that the utterances of Sophos and Dokeos are authoritative, only so far as the weight and variety of scriptural and rational argument which is put into their mouths may bring conviction to the mind of the reader.

THE AUTHOR.

MANCHESTER, 1874.



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## INTRODUCTION.

**I** HAD been reading the Divine words written in the ninety-first Psalm, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." I raised my eyes from the Bible, and fell a-musing. The house was still. All my family had retired to rest, and I was alone in my library. The ticking of the clock made monotonous music, quite in harmony with my slowly moving thoughts. This was the only sound, and it made me conscious how deep was the silence which otherwise reigned about me. The solemn night had passed its meridian; and, perhaps, I was a little wearied with the pleasant labours of an uninterrupted evening spent at my desk. If I was weary, I had no sense of the fatigue; but felt calmly thoughtful, serenely at my ease. My previous labour of research had been sufficiently rewarded, as my manuscript of notes and extracts shewed; and my work had been very agreeable. I had read the Psalm as my latest duty, and I paused at the verse I have quoted, and mused.

"HE shall give *His* angels:"—"He" refers to the Almighty, that is clear: the angels are "*His*!" "His

*angels:*—"Who and what are these angels? In what relation do they stand to the Almighty? What is their nature? Wherein do they differ from man? Where was their birthplace? When were they created? What is their present state? What are their joys, their hopes? What scope have they for the exercise of their powers? Are they all alike? Are there many of them? Do they increase in number? Whence does the increase come? How is it regulated? How are they arranged and subordinated? How are they employed? In short, what do the angels do?—Such were the questions which gently streamed through my mind, and became half-spoken thoughts.

"He shall give His angels *charge over thee:*"—Over whom? What charge? For what purpose? How fulfilled? How far can he, over whom charge is given, become conscious of the fact of their attendance and ministration? What are the laws which regulate the reception of such "charges," and their performance? Is it a universal fact—does it apply to all angels and to all men? Is it an abiding fact—will it for ever apply to angels and men?

What effect has such ministration on the moral and mental freedom of him concerning whom the charge is given?

"To *keep* thee in all thy ways:"—How keep? Is this guardianship perpetual, or intermittent? Why, then, are there falls and declinations in state, departures from the right, wanderings into wrong? Are the subjects of this ministration infallibly guided, necessarily protected and preserved?

"In their *hands* they shall *bear thee up:*"—Is this science or symbolism? What is meant by the "hands" of the angels? How do they "bear" us up?

"Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone :"—What is meant by these symbols? What "foot," and against what "stone"? Why this care? What are its limits?

Once more my mind reverted to the questions :—Who are the subjects of this ministration? Who are its agents? If it be universal in respect of men, what are the evidences of its reality? If not universal, what are the grounds of the selection of certain angels as guardians, and of certain men as the subjects of such guardianship?

Another thought suggested the question—Is there any profit in such inquiries? They may, perhaps, be frivolous; perhaps, they are unlawful!

"Ah," I exclaimed, "who shall be my teachers on these points? I want not old traditions, such as those that had birth in Egyptian, Babylonish, and Persian imaginations, some of which were preserved in fable by the Jews, and which have been perpetuated and multiplied in the Church. I ask not for superstitious fancies, born of poetic frenzy in the brain of a fasting Mohammed. Oh, that I could gain solid instruction on these themes, the truth of which might seem self-evident in the immutable necessity of things!"

With my elbow on my desk, and my head supported by my hand, I closed my eyes. I must have fallen asleep; for what followed could only have been a kind of dream, in which former remembrances seemed to become embodied, and spoke to me, following out into new and daring channels of speculation the topics they discussed. These topics were sufficiently various, and the ideas presented in regard to some of them were sufficiently startling, to fasten themselves on my memory.

When I became once more individually conscious, my head was lying on both arms, which were crossed beneath it on the desk. The sun had risen, its light was stream-

ing above the window-shutters into the room, paling into a sickly hue the light of my table lamp. I felt neither chilly nor weary, but commenced to record, as well as I could remember, the gist of what I had seen and heard.

This process of semi-dreaming, and of recording the conversations which then took place, continued at intervals for a considerable period. The conversations were resumed at the point where they had ceased on the former occasion; but as the method was but the vehicle for communicating the ideas, I have preferred not to indicate the breaks which occurred, so that the thoughts conveyed might be the more consecutively expressed.

Beyond doubt, many of the conclusions attained, and their processes of proof, may seem to some readers as surprising, even incomprehensible, and, perhaps, unwarrantable, as they did when first presented to me. With the impression they convey I have nothing to do. I am constrained to think that, at least, most of the statements of my teachers will be found decidedly suggestive; and on this, if on no other or higher ground, I venture to ask for them a careful and meditative perusal.

#### DOKEOS, OR MY FIRST TEACHER.

"Ah!" I had exclaimed, "who shall be my teachers on these themes?"

It seemed to me as though I was gradually enveloped in mist, at first a smoke, coloured grey, but slowly developing into a beautifully pure and clear atmosphere. Shapes, vague and indistinct, appeared to float rather than walk across my field of view. By degrees these shapes grew more defined: they were human forms. As they passed the spot where I seemed to be seated, they paused an

instant, and turned their faces toward me. They gazed at me and I at them. Their glance was neither welcoming nor menacing ; it seemed almost expressionless ; as cold and distant-looking as the face of an Egyptian sphinx. They had nothing to do with me, nor I with them. It was a panorama of diversified human faces and forms, like an army of shadowy shapes flitting past me ; silent, though observant ; passionless, feelingless, utterly unsympathetic.

As the host were passing, I saw behind them a man whose calm and statuesque beauty immediately attracted my attention, and seemed to awaken within me affection and confidence. He appeared to be of middle stature, and was clad in a loosely flowing robe. What was the material of the robe I did not think of observing ; in colour it seemed faintly tinged with amber. On his left shoulder he wore a resplendent jewel, which gathered up and fastened the graceful folds of his robe. All the colours of the rainbow seemed to be reflected from the superb single stone of which this ornament was formed. As he moved, the light, coming from I know not what source, appeared to blaze in brilliant irradiations from this stone. His throat was bare and vigorous. His face might have been that of a man of thirty years old, destitute of beard, smooth and finely chiselled ; his eyes appeared to be a dark grey, beneath strongly marked eyebrows, surmounted by a magnificent brow, over which long and curling locks of rich brown hair fell in masses. His eyes were wonderful in beauty ; calm, thought-bespeaking eyes, but full of tenderness. He seemed to be gazing at me with interest.

When he observed that he had fixed my attention, he made a graceful movement with his right hand, his left lay hidden in the folds of his robe upon his bosom, and



the shadowy shapes disappeared. Then he advanced, and stood close to me.

"I am here," he said. His voice was sonorous and clear as that of a full-toned tenor bell.

"Why are you here?" I seemed to ask, in thought rather than words.

"You asked for teachers: I am here."

"Can you, then, tell me what I have desired to know?" I asked.

"Only in part," he replied gravely. "I can teach you somewhat: but I can lead you to those who can teach you more. If you will follow I can lead."

"Who are you? What is your name?" I asked.

He smiled. "I am called by many names," he replied. "You may think of me as Dokeos."

"A Greek name," I said.

"It will do as well as another. We deal with thoughts, which may fall into any fitting form of words. The thought is the essential, the word is accidental; if the name conveys the thought, it performs its use, and so may serve us."

"Well, Dokeos, I am willing to consider," I said, seeing that he paused.

"Your questions as to the angels are not frivolous. He who created and preserves the human mind intended that it should be exercised. Every subject suggested in His manifold operations was designed to provoke inquiry, to stimulate thought. He asks not the unreasoning acquiescence of any understanding: else He had not made man intelligent and rational. No inquiry honestly commenced and intelligently pursued is frivolous. Even error, when resulting from honest investigation, is better than intellectual emptiness: one indicates activity; the other stagnation. If investigation be prolonged, the

error will be seen to be erroneous and will be abandoned: mental stagnation is intellectual death. Wisdom is justified of her children, all of whom had to toil by research into the attainment of knowledge."

"I am answered," I replied. "But are my questions unlawful?"

"Where is the law which forbids?" rejoined he, with a superb gesture of the hand, as sweeping away invisible obstructions. "The All-wise has revealed in His Word the existence of such beings as angels; He has also recounted some of their duties and has indicated something as to their nature. Just as what He has revealed concerning Himself was designed to provoke men to meditation, and further inquiry concerning Himself: so whatever else He has revealed on any subject was designed to stimulate to similar investigation. You still hesitate," he added tenderly. "Reflect! If your motive be to gratify an idle curiosity, the motive is unworthy, and the inquiry is, for that reason, unlawful. If your motive be earnestly to know the ways of God in these matters, your motive is worthy, and no precept prohibits the research. Reflect again! Whence can you obtain information relative to such themes? From the living oracles of the Most High? The revelation was given in order that it might be understood! From seers, whose eyes have been opened that they might see? The permission was accorded, that man might be instructed! From deep study and pious meditation, discerning the necessary laws of human and angelic life? The convictions thus attained are necessarily your tutors, whose teachings you dare not affect to despise!"

"Is not the inquiry dangerous?" I asked.

"Dangerous?" repeated Dokeos. "Only in the sense that all inquiry is dangerous. There is the danger of


erroneous conclusions : this danger must be encountered in all investigations. Only through such risks can men realize true knowledge. The danger of presumption : no law prohibits the human soul from prosecuting any inquiry, if pursued in a spirit of reverence. The danger of resting in limited, though not erroneous conclusions as though they were final perceptions of the truth : one generation will and should outgrow the defective knowledge of preceding times, and carry forward the wisdom of the past to higher achievements. The danger of being diverted by purely speculative studies from more practical, and therefore more immediately important themes : the capacities of each soul determine the law of choice in each soul of the subjects that shall engage its study. That most concerns each soul to know, about which each soul is most eager to learn. Who shall decide what is most important in the vast realm of knowledge? He who made souls to be so various and diversified was wise : His arrangements are the best. All wisdom is inter-related : we can say to no truth, 'I have no need of thee.'"

"I am satisfied," I answered. "I submit myself to your guidance."



## CHAPTER I.

### ANGELS ARE MESSENGERS—VARIOUS APPLICATIONS OF THE TERM.

“OU have asked, what are angels?” said Dokeos.  
“Explore your own mind. What do you  
already know or think on the subject?”

I answered :—“The word angel means *a messenger*; its Greek root signifies *to tell*, or to announce. Although specifically applied to spiritual beings of another nature than man, and who have been employed by the Lord on embassies of His Providence, the name does not strictly bear this limited signification.

“It is applied to men who have been employed by God as His messengers. Thus all messengers of God were really *angels* of God. Such were the prophets (Isa. xlii. 19; Hag. i. 13; Mal. iii. 1). Such likewise were priests (Mal. ii. 7). Such were the judges who judged in the name of the Most High, or as they were sometimes termed ‘Gods,’ *Elohim* (Psa. lxxxii. 6). Thus ‘the wise woman of Tekoah’ likened David to ‘an angel of God’; a comparison repeated by Mephibosheth (2 Sam. xiv. 17, 20, xix. 27).

“So John the Baptist, called ‘the messenger,’ is in the original Greek styled ‘the angel’ (Luke vii. 27); even

the 'messengers' of John are entitled 'the angels of John' (ver. 24) ; the messengers whom the Saviour sent before Him to Jerusalem also are called 'angels' (Luke ix. 52). So likewise James designates 'the messengers' sent by Joshua to Jericho, who were entertained by Rahab (ii. 25). Using the title in the same sense, Paul wrote to the Galatians, 'Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as *an angel of God*' (Gal. iv. 14). Hence also the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews admonishes Christians, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained *angels un-awares*' (Heb. xiii. 2). This, I suppose, means that the stranger who is entertained may be a 'messenger of God,' the bearer of heavenly tidings to those who receive and welcome him. In addressing 'the angel' of each of the seven Churches in Asia, the Lord may have addressed the presiding elder, officer, or bishop of each church, and thus have designated by this title a man employed as a 'messenger' of God."

"There is a far higher and wider meaning involved in the last instance you have cited," said Dokeos, "which we shall afterwards learn. But proceed."

"It seems, as I read the statement, that the word 'angel' is also applied to the spirit of a man after leaving the body. When Peter had been delivered from prison by an angel of the Lord, and had gone to the house of Mary, the mother of John, where many of the church had gathered for the purpose of holding a prayer-meeting, he knocked at the gate, a damsel named Rhoda came to hearken, and knew Peter's voice; she 'opened not the gate for gladness,' but ran in and told the assembled Christians that Peter stood at the gate. They said that she was mad ;

but when she constantly declared that Peter had indeed knocked and spoken, they said 'It is *his angel*,' meaning, I presume, that it was his spirit (Acts xii. 12-15). I have been taught that the Saviour's words concerning children—'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that *their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven*' (Matt. xviii. 10)—mean that the spirits—the angels—of children who die in infancy are thus privileged with being near to God."

"The interpretation is not correct," said Dokeos gravely; "but of that hereafter."

"At least then," I replied, "it shews that the Church has generally believed that one of the various significations of the word 'angel' is the departed spirit of a human being. Besides, the Saviour has taught us that after the resurrection men shall be 'like the angels' and 'equal to the angels.'"

Dokeos inclined his head in approval, and motioned me to continue.

"Certainly the word 'angel' is not restricted to good beings, whether in the spiritual or the natural world. The Psalmist states concerning the Israelites who had rebelled against the Divine Law, that the Lord 'cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, indignation and trouble, by sending *evil angels* among them' (Psa. lxxviii. 49). May I conclude that such an evil angel is referred to in the allegory of Job, where Satan, the adversary, is said to have gone up with the 'sons of God;' or in the allegory of the vision of the prophet Micaiah, where a spirit is described as 'a lying spirit' permitted to tempt Ahab to go up to Ramoth-Gilead to die? (1 Kings xxii. 21, 22)."

Once more Dokeos bowed his head and waved his hand.

"We certainly read," I continued, "of 'the Devil and *his angels*' (Matt. xxv. 41): we cannot but infer that these

'angels' were evil spirits. So also we read of Michael and his angels warring against the Dragon and his angels (Rev. xii. 7): these latter must be the wicked emissaries of the Dragon; the wicked spirits in high, or heavenly places, such as Paul wrote of."

"You are right," said Dokeos. "The word means messenger, and may be employed with respect of any one who is sent. But its specific signification?"

"The angels of God, those glorious spiritual beings whose dwelling-place is heaven, whose joy it is to 'do the commandments of God, hearkening unto the voice of His word'; those 'ministers of His who do His pleasure' (Psa. ciii. 20, 21); of whom we read that 'the chariots of God are thousands of angels' (Psa. lxxviii. 17). These are also styled 'the holy ones,' 'the sons of God,' and even 'gods.' It is of these wondrous and heavenly beings I seek to learn. Is it of these you are able to teach me?"

"I, with others," replied Dokeos. "Behold!"

#### SOPHOS, MY SECOND TEACHER.

No sooner had Dokeos uttered the word "Behold!" than there seemed to stand at his right hand a majestic old man, tall and stalwart in figure. He was clad in a pale purple-coloured robe, without ornament of any kind, which flowed in graceful lines from his shoulders to his feet. When once I had looked upon his face, it riveted my gaze. A full, firm set mouth, a slightly drooping nose, somewhat massive cheek and jaw bones, suggested great force of purpose and character. He had a noble, dome-like, massive brow. His eyes, however, were wonderful, they were glorious eyes; solemn, calm, and deep: they seemed as truly inlets to his mind as outlets through which his mind looked on external things.

There was something abstracted in his gaze, as though he were looking through and beyond me ; but capable of instant attention, and then expressive of serene kindness. He altogether seemed more massive and less emotional than Dokeos. The new comer might have been of another race than I, so solemn, stately, and majestic did he appear.

As I continued to gaze at him, the semblances of age which had at first impressed me passed away, seemed indeed to melt from about him, and his face then appeared like that of a man in the meridian of life, calm, experienced, and full of intellectual power. As he gazed at me, I felt humbled, and even abashed. It brought a sense of relief when he dropped his eyes toward the ground, or lifting them seemed to gaze beyond or above me.

The conception of concentrated power which to me he seemed to embody extended to his *pose*, his firmly set head, his erect attitude and his strongly planted feet ; and even his hands, deep knuckled, long fingered and solid palmed, conveyed the same impression. The idea was deepened by the close clustering masses of crisp curling hair which clung about his broad and deep white forehead, and covered his magnificent head.

While I gazed, there came to my mind the thought that I had somewhere seen such a man, or the portrait of such a man, or, at least, a picture which had suggested such a face to my imagination ; but it far exceeded in masculine beauty and dignity anything I had before conceived of. The atmosphere itself seemed to be brightened and to grow more pellucid about him.

I mentally asked Dokeos who the new comer was.

"You may call him *Sophos*," he answered ; "names designate qualities, and wisdom is his. He is one whose eyes have been opened, and who therefore has seen."





## CHAPTER II.

### THE ORIGIN OF ANGELS.

**“O**H, Sophos,” I exclaimed, “who and what are angels? Are they the first-born sons of God, created of purer substances than men, fashioned before the world was, to people the vast solitudes of heaven; the descending thought of God becoming incarnate in its transit through the spiritual realm, ere yet it had fixed itself final in the ultimate plane of nature, and man began to breathe the breath of life?”

Dokeos smiled gravely at this rhapsody, and he whom Dokeos had named Sophos replied to me. His voice was strong, clear and deep toned. His words were slowly enunciated, singularly distinct in utterance: the impression they left upon the memory seemed as though it could never be effaced. As he spoke, his right hand was a little raised, and gently moved, lending additional emphasis to his words:—

“Is it altogether unknown to you that heaven and hell are from the human race? I know that it is commonly believed that angels were created such from the beginning, and that this was the origin of heaven; that the Devil or Satan was an angel of light, who became rebellious, and was cast down from heaven with the third part

of the angelic host, and that this was the origin of hell. It is amazing that such a faith should prevail. There is not a single angel in the universal heaven who was originally created such, nor any devil in hell who was first created an angel of light and was afterward cast down thither ; all, both in heaven and hell, are from the human race. Angels are men who lived in the world in heavenly love and faith, and who have thence ascended to heaven: devils are men who lived in the world in infernal love and faith, and who have thence consigned themselves to hell."

"Can this be true?" I asked.

"It is true," replied Dokeos.

"But, do we not read——?" I began.

"Hear more before you attempt to judge," answered Dokeos. "Sophos, we listen."

"Man by creation is like an angel as to his interiors which are of the mind ; for the will and understanding of man are like the will and understanding of an angel ; and, therefore, after the decease of his natural body, if he has lived in the world according to Divine order, man becomes an angel, and has angelic wisdom. It is peculiar to man, and distinguishes him from an angel, that he is not only in the spiritual world as to his interiors, his soul or spirit, but also at the same time in the natural world as to his exteriors. His exteriors which are in the natural world are all things belonging to his body, and also his natural or external memory, the subjects of thought and imagination ; and these in general are knowledges and sciences, with their delights and pleasures, so far as they savour of the world ; and also the various pleasures which belong to the sensual principles of the body, together with the senses themselves, speech and actions. All these things are natural ultimates in which

the Divine influx of life from the Lord closes ; for Divine influx does not stop in the middle, but proceeds to its ultimates. Hence the ultimate of Divine order is in man, and because he is the ultimate of Divine order he is also its base and foundation. Since the Divine influx of the Lord does not stop in the middle, but proceeds to its ultimates ; since the middle, through which it proceeds, is the angelic heaven, and the ultimate is in man, and since anything unconnected cannot exist, it follows that the connection and conjunction of heaven with the human race are such that the one subsists from the other ; that the human race without heaven would be like a chain which had lost its middle links ; and that heaven without the human race would be like a house without a foundation."

"But," I remarked, "if man is thus dependent on the heavens for his inflowing life, does not this necessitate the prior existence of angels before man himself could exist?"

"Not so," rejoined Sophos. "Creation proceeded from first principles, or primates, to last principles, or ultimates, and thence to intermediates ; just as the purpose for which things are made can have no real existence apart from the causes by which they were produced, and both designs and causes have no real or objective existence till they are terminated or closed in effects. Divine Order never stops in a middle point, since then it would not be in its fulness and perfection—but proceeds to its ultimate ; and there commences formation. Design, cause and effect are made visible in the effect, just as love and wisdom are traceable in the Divine works."

"Then, you affirm that in the creation, although the design and the causes were prior in order of rank, effects were first in the order of time, that is, the natural world was created before the spiritual world?" I asked.

"I do so affirm," replied Sophos. "The Divine creative operation proceeding from Himself terminated itself in the ultimate plane, and there began to be visible and objective; thence it returned towards Himself and successively produced all intermediate things, including minerals, vegetation, animated forms of life, man, angels, the kingdoms of heaven, and all things that are therein."

"And what is this you style the ultimate?" I inquired.

"The extreme is the lowest of all created things, which you can conceive of as matter, apart from all other qualities except that it exists, and that it is lifeless and inert," responded Sophos.

"Where can we find such matter so devoid of qualities?" I demanded.

"Nowhere as an objective fact," answered Sophos. "All forms of matter with which you are acquainted are more or less modified and qualified by the life which they receive and embody. Yet, underlying all those natural forms is this extreme ultimate of existence, which we may style matter, giving to all things fixity and inertness. Life is the motor power, the universal active; matter is the thing moved or acted upon. What matter is in itself, apart from the qualities it receives from life, who can say? I cannot. It is the base of inertia, a quality of all created things. It furnishes the plane of resistance and of reaction. From Himself God produced matter, by successively depriving His emanation of all life, and of every quality; and from matter God has successively produced all things, by infusing into the material form which He has made, increasingly new and varied qualities with the life which He has caused to flow into them from Himself. Thus God is the Former and Originator of all things, while yet the creation remains ever distinct from Him who created it."

"This theory demands meditation, which I cannot now give to it, Sophos," I said. "But tell me, what, then, is the intrinsic difference between angels and men?"

"I have answered you already," rejoined Sophos. "Angelic minds and human minds are similar. Both enjoy the faculty of understanding, perceiving and willing; and both are formed to receive heavenly love and wisdom. The human mind is capable of wisdom equally with the angelic mind, but it does not become so wise in the world; for one reason among many, because it is in an earthly body, and in that body the spiritual mind thinks naturally. It is otherwise when the human mind is released from its connexion with the body, for then it no longer thinks naturally, but spiritually; and when it thinks spiritually, it grasps ideas which are incomprehensible and ineffable to the natural man, and thus it becomes wise like an angel. The internal of man, which is called his spirit, is in its essence an angel; when it is released from the earthly body, it is in a human form like an angel; for all angels are in a perfect human form; and, if the man has loved God and worked righteousness, he becomes as the Lord said, 'as the angels,' and is an angel."

"Angels are men in heaven: good men are angels on earth," added Dokeos.

"Our poet Young," I observed, "has written:—

'Angels are men of a superior kind;  
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,  
High o'er celestial mountains winged in flight;  
And men are angels loaded for an hour,  
Who wade this miry vale, and climb, with pain  
And slippery step, the bottom of the steep.  
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise:  
While here, of corps ethereal; such enrolled  
And summoned to the glorious standard soon,  
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies;'

but I have thought that this was poetic thought, using poetic license."

"It is a noble expression of a 'great truth,'" replied Dokeos. "In what do angels and men differ? In form? No! Every angel that ever appeared to man was in the human form. In many places they are spoken of both as 'men' and as angels. The three who appeared to Abraham are called 'men;' the two who appeared to Lot are called 'men;' the angel who wrestled with Jacob is called a 'man;' he who appeared to Joshua at Jericho, and who described himself as the 'Captain of the Lord's host,' is called 'a man with a drawn sword in his hand;' the angel who appeared to the wife of Manoah is called a 'man;' the angels who appeared to Ezekiel are severally called 'men;' Gabriel is described by Daniel as 'the man Gabriel;' the 'angel of the Lord' who was seen by Zechariah 'riding on a red horse' is called a 'man;' the women who went to the sepulchre, on entering in, saw 'a young man, clothed in long white garments;' two 'men' also stood by them in shining garments, who were 'two angels in white.' The seer and apostle in the Revelation identifies angels with men; he says that the angel 'measured the wall' of the New Jerusalem, 'according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.' Angels are men in human form."

"The wings with which they are customarily endowed by painters——?"

"Are conventional symbols of earthly art to indicate angels, doubtless suggested by the idea of the velocity and freedom of angelic movements, their ascending and descending, their goings and comings to man," responded Dokeos. "Of course there are no little cherubs, mere heads and wings,—another conceit of artists."

"The statement is suggestive," I remarked. "But proceed."

"Angels and men, therefore, do not differ in form," resumed Dokeos. "Some undoubtedly were from the human race, as Moses and Elias, who ministered to the Saviour on the Mount of Transfiguration; or that angel who declared to John that 'I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets;' or the innumerable multitude of all nations and peoples who stood before the Lamb, having palms in their hands, who are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple, from whose eyes God hath wiped away all tears."

"In what then," I asked, "do angels differ from man?"

"Not in form," rejoined Dokeos. "They certainly do differ in substance. Angels are immaterial beings, in so far as the substance of which their bodies are composed is not matter, nor is it subject to the laws by which all material substances are limited and bound. Yet they are substantial entities. Form is the limitation of substance, and they have form; substance is that which form limits, and they are substantial. To deny this is dangerous, for the only logical alternative is that an angel is no-thing or nothing, existing no-where. There are three degrees of substance, each distinct in its qualities: these are Divine, Spiritual, and Material. Of the first is God, and we know no more. Of the second are angels, and the spirits of men. Of the third is the natural body of man while he lives on the earth; and of such also are all things which surround man. At death, man's spirit is disrobed of its previous material covering, and he, too, is then a being, human in form and spiritual in substance. Then in form and substance man becomes 'like unto the angels.'

"Do they differ in wisdom? Yes. But the relation between man's wisdom and angelic wisdom is that of degree alone. Man can, and will, attain to the angelic standard, by having developed in him angelic capacities, already potentially existing in his soul; and which are therefore prophetic of his future state. Do they differ in intensity of love? Yes. But such a difference is likewise due to development; and the development of a good man will continue throughout eternity, and thus he will, and must, in his power of loving, attain to the stature of angelhood. If, therefore, men in the spiritual world and angels are similar in form, similar in substance, similar in intellectual nature, and similar in their capacity of eternal growth in love and wisdom, is it not probable that they were similar in their origin; that they were similar in the early stages of their history as they are similar in their destiny—eternal habitation in the heavens of God?"

"You have, at least, this fact in support of your argument," I observed, "that human attributes are, in the Scriptures, always applied to angels."

"It is true," replied Dokeos. "It springs not from any fancied necessity of anthropomorphism; it describes an actual and objective fact! There is also this additional fact, which you previously remarked, that the word 'angel' is not restricted in its application to heavenly beings, but is also applied to John the Baptist, his disciples, and others."

"Origen certainly believed," I added, "that some of the angels in heaven had been men on earth, who, as he says, had 'passed from the rank of men into that of angels,' and that 'other angels in heaven having once been men, and having, when in the bodies of men, fought the good fight, are become angels of heaven, as



certain others again had done before them.' But were not some angels created such? Do we not read of angels who existed previously to man?"

#### POPULAR THEORIES AS TO THE DEVIL.

"What are the statements?" asked Dokeos.

"All those that have suggested the notion of a war in heaven, of the rebellion and fall of a third part of the heavenly host, of the existence of the great Tempter, called the Devil, and on which the poet Milton has built his sublime epic, *Paradise Lost*," I rejoined.

"What are the statements?" repeated Dokeos.

"Such," I rejoined, "as we read of in Jude (ver. 6), where he speaks of 'angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation,' whom God 'hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.' Does not Peter also tell us that 'God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains and darkness to be reserved unto judgment?' Are we not likewise informed, that 'the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair, and took them wives of all which they chose; and that the results of these marriages between heavenly and earthly beings were monstrous giants, as great in iniquity as in size? Has not the Saviour further implied the existence of angels before man when He declares that 'Ye are of your father the Devil. . . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it?' And finally, does not the Eternal Himself interrogate Job: 'Whereupon are the foundations of the earth fastened? or who laid

the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Who were these morning stars? Who were these pre-earthly sons of God? Who are the cherubim of the Old Testament, and who the four living creatures or 'beasts' of the Apocalypse?"

Dokeos smiled gravely at the impetuosity of my inquiries. Sophos gazed with calm curiosity upon my face as I uttered the questions.

"Is there any other argument in favour of this theory?" asked Dokeos.

"I can remember none other at this moment," I replied; "but doubtless, as we proceed, others will occur to my mind."

"Examine these statements, Dokeos," said Sophos with gentle dignity. "What are they worth?"

#### THE ANGELS WHO SINNED.

"We will consider, first, the statements of Jude and Peter," said Dokeos. "You will perceive that neither of these writers declare as original information the circumstance to which they both refer. They allude to the notion as one generally and commonly held at the time. Whence then did they, in common with others, obtain the information concerning these sinful angels? The Scriptures give no account of such a circumstance. It is true that the Word speaks of the sons of God marrying with the daughters of men; but whatever that may mean, it does not imply such a rebellion and fall of angels as is now in your thought. If this circumstance is to be understood literally, it asserts the sexuality of angels in a remarkable manner, a consequence which may be repugnant to your present ideas. Jude and Peter did not learn from the

inspired book of Genesis this notion of the sinful and punished angels ; for while the Book of Genesis describes a sin, it says nothing concerning the punishment. But we need not waste time in surmises ; for Jude himself, a little further on, names a book, the Book of Enoch, and quotes from it the words, 'Behold the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of His saints.' Do you know anything of that book ?"

"Yes," I rejoined. "It was often mentioned by the early Christian writers. It was afterwards supposed to be lost. Three hundred years ago a fragment was discovered by Joseph Scaliger, but which did not contain the words of Jude. Hence it was deemed to be not genuine. But an Ethiopic version had at length been discovered in Abyssinia by Mr. Bruce, the distinguished traveller ; and it was translated into English by Dr. Lawrence. In this version is contained, not only the fragment discovered by Joseph Scaliger, but also the original of the statement of Jude, as to the angels which kept not their first estate."

"Does not this Book of Enoch assert that the sin of the angels was in marrying the daughters of men ; and does it not also contain a supposititious history of the angels who sinned in this manner ; and does it not furnish a description of their punishment ; and does it not likewise mention the exact circumstances as to their punishment which are referred to by both Peter and Jude ?"

"I will examine," I replied.

"Do so," rejoined Dokeos ; "and you will find that it is there stated that Azael, one of the leaders of the sinning angels, is 'bound hand and foot, and cast into darkness, to be brought forth to the burning in the day of judgment.' In like manner, Semiazas, another of their leaders, is said to be bound with his companions for

‘seventy generations under the hills of the earth, until the accomplishment of the age of ages.’ So you may read in the translation you have spoken of these words :—‘Again the Lord said to Raphael, *Bind Azazyel hand and foot; cast him into darkness*; and opening the desert which is in Dudaël, cast him in there. Throw upon him hurled and pointed stones; *covering him with darkness*; there shall he remain for ever; cover his face that he may not see the light; and in the great day of judgment *let him be cast into the fire.*’ So again you will find there the statement: ‘To Michael likewise the Lord said, Go and announce (his crime) to Samyaza, and to the others who are with him, who have been associated with women, that they might be polluted with all their impurity. And when all their sons shall be slain, when they shall see the perdition of their beloved, *bind them for seventy generations underneath the earth, even to the day of judgment*, and of consummation, until the judgment, (the effect of) which will last for ever, be completed.’ Here, then, you may see sufficient proof that the whole account of the transaction referred to by Peter and Jude is taken from the Book of Enoch.

“Now let us consider the narrative.

“The transaction itself does not refer to any ‘rebellion and fall of angels prior to the creation of man;’ but to something which is said to have occurred since the creation of man. The statements, consequently, afford no support to your notions of *the pre-existence of angels*, because the sinning angels are said to be not prior existences, but contemporaneous with the daughters of men.

“Nor do these statements lend the slightest countenance to the opinion that angels are of a different race from men; but the contrary. If the actual sin was literally as described, there must be almost an identity of

nature between those angels and those women ; how else could there have been offspring from such unions ? The law of species is irreversible : creatures of different species are infertile as between each other. If the narrative is an allegorical statement of something which really did occur, you manifestly cannot base any dogma on the symbols used in an allegory ; nor can you affix to such symbols scientific or historical accuracy.

"In any case, inasmuch as these sinful angels were contemporaries of man, their fall cannot refer to any rebellion which took place long prior to man's appearance on the earth ; and inasmuch as their punishment is that they are bound in chains and darkness, these sinful angels cannot be the devils and Satans who freely wander everywhere, to tempt and destroy mankind. Hence the passages you quote from Peter and Jude do not refer to any rebellion in heaven prior to the creation of man, and do not support the theory that such a rebellion was the origin of the *Do-evil*, the Devil and his angels."

"Dokeos, thou hast reasoned well !" said Sophos, laying his hand on the other's arm.

"But," I urged, "peradventure the Book of Enoch is one of the inspired Books of the Word ?"

"It is not," replied Sophos.

"Peradventure," rejoined Dokeos, "the two Epistles themselves must be regarded as apocryphal ; and possibly the citation from the apocryphal Book of Enoch, as though it were inspired, is the clearest proof that they are apocryphal ?"

"Many in ancient times did so regard these Epistles," I observed, "and Michaelis, among moderns especially, so regards the Epistle of Jude."

"Can you, then, build up a theory as to the pre-existence of angels on the no-foundation of a reference

by questionable epistles to an allegorical story contained in an apocryphal book ; and which story, after all, does not assert that the incidents therein described occurred prior to man's creation, but, on the contrary, includes then living human beings in the sin?"

"Paul certainly does not guarantee the inspiration or correctness of the apocryphal and heathen writers from whom he sometimes quotes," I remarked, hesitatingly.

"True," replied Dokeos, "and even were it shown that these two Epistles were genuine, the reference they make to a statement currently believed at the time, and quoted by the writers as the basis of an argument intended to show the certainty of the destruction of false teachers, cannot be regarded as any guarantee by them that the belief as to the sin of angels and its punishment, so referred to, was founded on truth."

#### THE WAR IN HEAVEN.

"But do we not read in the Apocalypse of a war in heaven, and of the angels of Michael overcoming the Devil and his angels, and that the latter were cast out?" I urged.

"The Apocalypse," replied Dokeos, "was a vision of what was still in the future at the time that it was written. This war, therefore, was an event which had not then occurred ; it was prophecy, not history. How then could it refer to some circumstance which had taken place long prior to the creation of man ? Surely you cannot suppose that there had been a previous war, and that, subsequent to John's vision, there was to be a second war in heaven. If you do thus suppose, the prophecy lends you no support for such a view. Whatever, therefore, the passage may mean, it cannot by any system of

wresting be made to refer to the pre-existence of angels. The Dragon was 'overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the testimony' of the angels ; hence the events were to take place subsequently to the death of the Lamb. The Dragon is called 'the accuser of our brethren :' these brethren were, therefore, contemporary with the Dragon. When the Dragon was cast out, he went to make war with 'the seed of the woman,' the Church of the Saviour, those 'which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus,' and such, consequently, must be living at the time here spoken of. You must not take what was a prophecy of a future event, as being the history of a supposed event, said to have occurred long antecedent to the creation of man."

"There are, however, many most important secrets of heavenly wisdom contained in the circumstance which John predicts," said Sophos ; "but this is not the time to consider them. For the immediate purpose of your argument, the reply of Dokeos is sufficient."

#### THE SONS OF GOD AND THE DAUGHTERS OF MEN.

"Let us then go back," I said. "What am I to understand by the sons of God seeing that the daughters of men were fair, and taking wives of all they chose?"

Sophos replied to me : "The first eleven chapters of Genesis are written in the style of an allegory ; every statement is symbolic and not literal, and can only be rightly understood when spiritually interpreted. Literal and external history begins in the Word with the account of the birth of Abraham. Before that event, the real subject-matter of the apparently historical narratives is the description of the spiritual states of increasing evil into which mankind entered, and through which mankind sunk.

The spiritual signification of these early chapters can be learned from the heavenly Science of Correspondences, of which we shall have much to say, and which shows that all natural and spiritual things are mutually representative and symbolic, and which arranges and classifies these mutually equivalent correspondences. These things being premised, we can now examine the narrative to which you refer. It describes a state in the descent of the Most Ancient Church, which continually and increasingly departed from the love of goodness and fidelity to truth. Prior to its 'consummation' or destruction, and as tending thereto,—representatively described as the deluge,—the 'sons of God,'—those doctrines of divine truth which the people still retained as matters of knowledge,—'saw the daughters of men,'—mere human lusts, carnal appetites, sensual delights,—and accounted them 'fair'—desirable and attractive. 'They took them wives of all they chose'—they became united with them so as to be one. The meaning is, that men associated their knowledges of divine truth with impious lusts, profaned their truths with impious sins. This association is representatively described as a marriage, and the resulting states of evil thoughts and affections are allegorically pictured as 'giants,' states of evil which were monstrous, terrible and destructive. The way was thus prepared for the 'consummation,' the deluge; the spiritual state of mankind was becoming full of iniquity, and rendered the end inevitable. Truth and evil were wedded together, 'the sons of God' and the 'daughters of men.' The fact, thus allegorically described, was a spiritual fact; it reveals a fatal step in the continued fall of mankind."

"It cannot signify what is literally implied in the words," added Dokeos; "for the intercourse of marriage certainly cannot take place between spiritual beings and



the material bodies of men or women on earth. Spiritual and natural bodies belong to different planes of existence, and are even invisible to each other."

"I find that I must relinquish the passage for the purpose I adduced it," I said. "I will meditate on your statement. Meanwhile, what must I conclude from the words of the Lord as to the Devil?"

#### THE DEVIL A MURDERER FROM THE BEGINNING.

"If the Devil were 'a murderer *from the beginning*,' how can he have been created an angel of light?" demanded Dokeos. "If 'there was no truth in him,' or more strictly, if 'the truth is not in him,' how can you construe these words to mean that for long ages the truth was in him, and that he afterwards fell from the truth? The phrase 'he abode not in the truth' may lead to a misapprehension, as seeming to imply that he was once in the truth but did not remain therein. The word translated *abode* is more strictly rendered *stood*, 'he *stood* not in the truth,' which agrees more completely with the context that 'the truth is not in him.' A dilemma is involved in the passage. Must we suppose that God made him a devil from the beginning, although temporarily appearing as an angel of light, and that he fell because he was made by God to be a devil and a murderer from the beginning? In this case, God was truly the author and originator of evil! Must we not understand the Lord to here speak of the principle of evil as it is in its own essential nature, or as representatively personified as the *Do-evil*, the Devil. Thus to personify evil does not show that there is an actual personification of evil. There is no one great terrible Anti-God; no one supreme ruler of hell, who is either uncreated and self-existent, and to this extent equal, though anta-

gonistic, to God ; or who was created by the Infinite Wisdom and Goodness. There is not a passage in the whole of the Old Testament in which mention is made of a devil ; the word 'devils' occurs four times. There are devils many, as there are angels many ; but every one of these devils was once a man on earth, who became such by the voluntary and continued violation of Divine laws. God did not prepare a hell for men who become devils : men make their own hells and fling themselves therinto. Yet all devils, considered as forming one great aggregate evil power, are often spoken of as THE DEVIL, the principle of evil as embodied in the persons of all who love and cherish evil. The Devil from the beginning, therefore, means the principle of evil in its deepest and inmost ground. It was ever a 'murderer,' seeking to destroy all spiritual life in the hearts of the children of men. It is essentially an 'Apollyon,' an exterminator, dealing forth spiritual death. This principle of evil, further, is 'a liar and the father of lies ;' because all evil gives birth to falsity. Evil itself is a lie and calumny against the Eternal Goodness ; when it takes form in thought, or utterance in dogma, it is a lie and calumny against the Eternal Truth—a liar and the father of lies."

#### NO PERSONAL DEVIL.

"There is, then, no arch-fiend, no personal Devil?" I asked.

"There is not," replied Dokeos. "I have already told you that the word 'devil' nowhere occurs in the Old Testament. The word 'devils' occurs four times. The Israelites were forbidden to offer sacrifices unto 'devils' (Lev. xvii. 7); but this injunction really means that they should not sacrifice to unclean spirits, infernal disposi-

tions, desires, or lusts, represented by or personified in the deities of the idolatrous nations around them. The original word (*Sgnirim*) is derived from the word *Sgnir*, meaning literally 'the hair of the head,' and which came to signify a hairy one, a goat of a hairy kind, which also is the symbol of unclean lust. Such 'hairy ones' were the *Satyrs*; and of these mongrel monsters, partly human and partly bestial, the heathen deity Pan was the representative, as the type of fecundity or fruitfulness. So Jeroboam, when the Levites fled to Judah and Jerusalem, ordained for himself 'priests for the high places and for the devils' (2 Chron. xi. 13-17). They were these 'hairy ones,' these supposititious deities of the idolaters. In the other two passages the word *Sheedim* is used, a word which is derived from *Sheed*, signifying *breasts*, or *to pour forth*."

"Parkhurst says," I intruded, "that 'as a noun masculine plural it was the name given by the Hebrews to the idols worshipped by the inhabitants of Canaan.' Isis was one of these *Sheedim*, one of the 'many-breasted' ones; so also was Diana, on the statues of which was inscribed 'all various nature, mother of all things.' The statues of these goddesses preserved and imaged the 'many-breasted' appellation."

"True," rejoined Dokeos; "under such representations the heathens personified prolific principles in nature, and worshipped nature under symbols of their own devising. When Israel sank to the same degraded level 'they sacrificed unto devils, and not to God' (Deut xxxii. 17); the word 'devils' is here *Sheedim*. So the Psalmist declares, 'They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils (*Sheedim*), and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood' (Psa. cvi. 36, 37). There is in all these

statements the plural idea, that of there being 'devils'; but no intimation of there being one almost omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent evil spirit who is emphatically THE DEVIL."

"But the name and idea of Satan is to be found in the Old Testament," I said.

"That branch of the subject we will consider presently," replied Dokeos. "We are now speaking of the word *devil*."

"Come to the New Testament, Dokeos," I observed. "Surely the idea is therein taught."

"It is not taught therein," he replied. "You are aware, no doubt, that the words 'devil' and 'devils' occur in the English translation of the New Testament about one hundred and twenty times. Of these, thirty-eight are in the Greek *diabolos* and *diaboloi*, the original meaning of which is *the False Accuser*, the *Calumniator*. But, as you also know, this word *diabolos*, or in its plural form *diaboloi*, is also used as a common noun to describe a *false accuser*, a *calumniator*: the wives of deacons must be 'grave, not slanderers (*diaboloi*), faithful in all things' (1 Tim. iii. 11); the aged women are to be not 'false accusers,' *diaboloi* (Titus ii. 3); in the perilous times then to come, men should be, among other evil things, 'false accusers,' *diaboloi* (2 Tim. iii. 1-3); one of the twelve apostles was a devil,—a *false accuser*, *diabolos* (John vi. 70); this spirit or disposition of false accusation, this devil, put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray the Lord (John xiii. 2). The accusing spirit, or disposition, has been misconceived to be a great accusing spirit, or being. So again Elymas the sorcerer is called 'a child of the devil' (*uie diabolou*), a child of sin and iniquity, desiring to murder goodness and to generate lies, being of the state characterised by our Saviour as that of a murderer

from the beginning, the father of lies. This does not say that there is a personal Devil, and that Elymas was his son.

"When Peter wrote 'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour' (1 Pet. v. 8), he did not write of some great semi-divine enemy of mankind, but of human false accusers, an adversary, *antidikos*, an opponent at law, who would accuse them to the civil magistrate, and charge them with the violation of moral or legal duty: it means that 'your opponent, *the false accuser*, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.' The common noun, 'false accuser,' has been deemed to be a proper name or noun of title, belonging to an individual entity, some supreme devil. The use of this word in the plural indicates that there are many devils: the notion of lifting one of these into supremacy over all the rest, is the offspring of a merely classifying imagination."

"The enemy which sowed tares is the *Devil*," I remarked.

"The spirit of disobedience working in the hearts of the children of men," answered Dokeos, "which began to work, and so introduced evil, and which still worketh, and will work; but 'the spirit of disobedience' is a different thing from a great disobedient Spirit; yet out of the one conception, which is true, has grown the other, which is not true."

"The seed on the wayside were caught away by the Devil," I urged.

"The spirit of indifference, callousness, and selfish love, which prevents truth finding even a lodgment in the soul," returned Dokeos. "Why should you seek for an agency external to man, to explain facts for which the internal furniture of the soul is fully adequate?"

"Nay," said Sophos, gently interposing, "the influence of evil spirits on the thoughts and affections of man is beyond question, and it is terrible. But the circumstance you refer to does not show the existence of a personal and supreme Fiend."

"True, O Sophos!" replied Dokeos.

"The Devil, *diabolos*, who tempted the Saviour in the wilderness," I asked, "what of him?"

"A mighty evil spirit," said Sophos, "one of many with whom the Lord had to fight, and whom He overcame, during the temptation-combats of which His life was full, before He could take 'the keys of hell and death.' This was a devil who sought to inject into the Saviour's soul the evil promptings represented by the three temptations, and which the Lord rejected by means of the written Word; falling not in this, or in any other temptation, though He was 'tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin.' God is a God of order, ever operating for the production of what is good. His laws when known constitute, in relation to man, the Truth. If there were such a Devil as you have conceived, he would be either equal to God, or second only to God. If equal to God, he could not have been created: and then, there would be two deities, a good deity, and an evil one: but this is a fancy of delusion. If he be second only to God, God must have created him, and thus the All-Good would be the parent of that which is altogether evil: He must thereby have acted contrarily to His own nature; He must therein have violated His own law of order, and have produced Disorder! No such contrariety can exist in God. A house divided against itself cannot stand."

"But if devils exist and they did not produce themselves, God is the author of evil in their case," I urged.

"Not so," rejoined Sophos, "for though they did not produce themselves, they did make themselves devils, having been endowed with the universal human prerogative, the power of free choice. Yet is their ability limited, not unlimited; and their wisdom is cunning. Their states are direful, and their animosity relentless; but were they all combined in one vast phalanx, they altogether would not constitute such a power as is conceived of by those who speak of a personal devil. It is not against the existence and operation of *devils* that Dokeos has been contending; but against the existence of some supreme lord and ruler over hell,—as though all the hells were in such a condition of order and subordination as to permit the sovereign rule of any of even the worst devil of them all! No. Each devil desires to be the head, and deems himself the only fit person to be the head, and is ready to destroy any who claim authority over him. This is the inevitable outbirth of the lust of spiritual dominion—the most infernal of all lusts. Disorder reigns in hell because there is no headship acknowledged, and no obedience rendered. It is only where the love of service, of ministration, and of use rules, that true order and loving subordination can be found: it is only in heaven that one grand Head and Ruler is acknowledged, which Ruler and Head is the Lord. In recognising worth the angels worship; they evince their wisdom in submitting to the Wisest; their love of goodness in obeying the Best."

#### THE DEMONS.

"And what, Dokeos, of the other eighty-two passages in the New Testament in which *devil* and *devils* occur in our English version?" I asked.

"Three words are therein used in the Greek," replied Dokeos; "two of these are derived from the first. They are *daimōn*, from which come *daimonion*, and *daimonizomai*. The first occurs only five times (in Matt. viii. 31; Mark v. 12; Luke viii. 29; Rev. xvi. 14, xviii. 2); the second, sixty-four times; the third, thirteen times. The word *daimōn* is rendered 'devil,' though more frequently used in the plural, 'devils'; the word *daimonion* means the person who was possessed by the *daimōn*, or devil, the demoniac; and the passive verb, *daimonizomai*, means to be possessed by a *daimōn*. What were these 'demons'? All Greek literature plainly indicates that they were 'the human spirits of departed people.' These were not necessarily bad spirits; for some of them were supposed to have been deified, and were even worshipped. Homer calls all his gods 'demons;' and Hesiod, 'the worthies of the golden age.' Hesiod maintains that whenever a good man dies he becomes a demon; and Plato praises him for the sentiment. The 'demon' of Socrates must surely be familiar to you. The Greeks and the Latins believed in the existence of evil demons, and in the possibility of 'possession;' as did also the Jews. Josephus says that 'those called *daimonia* are the spirits of wicked men who enter the living, and kill those who have no help.' Exorcists of these demons were known to all three peoples. Hence the Jews said of the Saviour, 'He casteth out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons;' meaning, that He cast out inferior demons by aid of superior demons, or by the assistance of their Prince. The existence of these demons, therefore, only confirms what we have told you before, that all devils were once men."

"But this Beelzebub," I asked, "does not his description apply to the supreme devil?"



"Yes, if the statement of the unbelieving Pharisees that he is 'the prince of demons' is adequate authority," rejoined Dokeos. "Their referring the Lord's power to this source at least showed that the fact of possession and the practice of exorcism were not an astonishment to them. This is farther shown in the story of Sceva and his sons, exorcists (Acts xix. 13, 14): but the opinion of these Pharisees as to whence the Lord's power was derived can hardly furnish a sufficient basis for believing in a personal arch-fiend. Who, then, was this Beelzebub, the so-called 'Prince of demons?' He was 'the god of Ekron,' to whom Ahaziah, the King of Israel, sent messengers to ask whether he would recover from his disease (2 Kings i. 2). The word *zebub*, or *zebul*, means a *fly*, the god of which was worshipped at Ekron. But Baal-zebub, a 'god of flies,' is clearly traceable beyond the limits of Asia Minor; for one of the Greek designations of Jupiter was *μυῖόδες*, 'the god of flies,' and another was *μυῖαγρος*, 'the fly hunter.' Unless, then, you acknowledge that Jupiter was the ruler of the gods, and also 'the god of flies,' you cannot contend that Baal-zebub, the Syrian form of the same idea, was the 'prince of the demons,' for which, indeed, you have, in the New Testament, only the authority of the unbelieving Pharisees."

"In every widely diffused and predominant notion adopted by men as a religious belief," said Sophos, "there is a germ of truth; though it may be overlaid by a host of superstitions, often gross, often grotesque, and always fanciful. It has been thus with the demonology of the ancients. Within this apparently most fanciful of superstitions have been preserved four great truths: that men continue to live after the death of the body; that the spirits of good men become angels, termed by them

'good demons,' that the spirits of wicked men become 'evil demons;' that an association is maintained by such spirits with man, the good spirits influencing mankind to good ends, and the wicked for evil and injurious purposes. These are unquestionable and important truths. When we sift away the chaff, the grain remains; and the 'dæmons' of Hesiod and Plato, the Cerriti and Larvati of the Latins, and the *daimonai* of the Jews, serve but as so many separate but mutually corroborating witnesses, testifying to the great facts of the continued existence of man beyond the grave, and his ability to influence the minds and wills of men on earth."

"The argument is most instructive, and it certainly appears to me to be complete," I exclaimed.

"It is therefore probable, despite all objections," resumed Dokeos, "that 'demons,' *daimones*, were so named from *daiō*, 'to distribute,' because these spirits occupied a middle position between the gods and men on earth, and 'distributed' the favours of the gods to men. They had been men, these 'demons,' for their parentage was often even traced. Saturn, Jupiter, Apollo, and others, the secondary gods of Paganism, may have been no more than, as Diodorus Siculus says, 'illustrious men;' according to his own distinction, 'there are two classes of gods, the one eternal and immortal, the other such as were born on the earth, and who arrived at the titles and honours of divinity on account of the blessings they bestowed on mankind.'\* The deities of the Northmen were a group of great heroes, lawgivers, and warriors; and as Philo Biblius, the translator of Sanchoniathon's History of the Gods, states, 'the Phœnicians and Egyptians, from whom other peoples derived this custom, reckoned those among the greatest gods who had been benefactors to the

\* Lib. i. and v.

human race ; and that to them they erected pillars and statues, and dedicated sacred festivals.' " \*

"It appears reasonable as an hypothesis," I remarked, "and sufficiently established by testimony."

"Or, as Plato remarks," added Dokeos, "'All those who die valiantly in war are of Hesiod's golden generation, and become dæmons ; and we ought for ever to worship and adore their sepulchres as the sepulchres of dæmons.' † The orgies of Walhalla of the Scandinavians is but the Northern, and the Moslem paradise for the brave is but the more modern and Eastern, echo of the world-wide conception. To find the universal thought as evidenced and illustrated in the never-ending variety of its phases, this is true wisdom. It is to subsidize the universe and compel all things to pay tribute to the eternal truth."

#### SATAN NOT THE NAME OF ONE GREAT SPECIAL FIEND.

"One part of this topic yet remains untouched," I observed. "Does not the use of the name 'Satan' imply that there is some great prevailing fiend?"

"The word Satan occurs seventeen times in the Old, and thirty-six times in the English translation of the Scriptures," said Dokeos ; "but it also occurs fourteen times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, translated 'adversary' or 'adversaries.' Wherever it occurs in the English, it is the original Hebrew word left untranslated. Your question is,—Is this word 'Satan' the name of a great and terrible evil spirit? I answer, No. There are several proofs of this. It is used in the plural form, 'Satans,' as well as in the singular. The sons of Zeruiah are thus spoken of as adversaries

\* Apud Eusebius, *Præp. Evangelica*, lib. i. c. ix. p. 32.

† Plato, *de Republica*, c. v. 468, tom. ii. editio Serrani.

—‘Satans’—unto David (2 Sam. xix. 22); so David prays, ‘Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries—“Satans”—to my soul’ (Psa. lxxi. 13); ‘For my love they are my adversaries—“Satans”—but I give myself unto prayer’ (Psa. cix. 4); ‘Let this be the reward of my adversaries—“Satans”—and of them that speak evil of my soul’ (ver. 20). If every adversary is a Satan, and there are many Satans, the name cannot exclusively belong to one great fiend. The word is also applied to men, and that too without implying that they were wicked men, as in the case of the sons of Zeruiah. David also is spoken of as a possible adversary—‘Satan’—to the Philistines (1 Sam. xxix. 4). Solomon sent a message to Hiram, King of Tyre, in which he states that he had no adversary—‘Satan’ (1 Kings v. 2-4). Hadad the Edomite is described as an adversary—‘Satan’—to Solomon, ‘stirred up by the Lord’ (1 Kings xi. 14). So we read that God stirred up another adversary—‘Satan’—to King Solomon, Rezon the son of Eliadah (1 Kings xi. 23), who was an adversary—‘Satan’—to Solomon all his days (ver. 28). The word Satan is even applied to the angel of the Lord who appeared to Balaam, ‘Behold I went out to be an adversary—“a Satan”—unto thee, because thy way is perverse before me’ (Numb. xxii. 23). This must convince you that the word Satan is not the proper name of any one terrible evil spirit.”

“True,” I answered, “and yet, is it not applied as a name to the evil spirit who tempted Job, and who was permitted to test his faith?”

“The word Satan occurs in the Book of Job twelve times. But that book is a dramatic poem, and the converting into a proper name of a common noun, the speaking of an adversary as *the Adversary*, is in harmony with the purpose and structure of the poem. You can-

not seriously believe that such colloquies as are therein described did actually and literally take place between the Infinite Majesty on high and some arch-fiend named Satan?"

"No," I replied. "I cannot believe that. Yet is it not possible that the name of our great enemy is Satan, and that thence it comes that all adversaries are termed 'Satans'?"

"Is it not more probable," asked Dokeos, "that as 'Satan' means adversary, the word gradually became individualized as representing the great adversary of man's soul?"

"The great enemy of man's spiritual welfare," said Sophos, "is the love of self; whatever falsity panders to this love is truly the 'Satan' of his soul."

"Hence Peter," resumed Dokeos, "though he immediately before had confessed the Saviour to be the Son of God, when he, unable to understand that only suffering sanctifies, rebuked the Lord, was addressed, 'Get thee behind Me, *Satan*' (Matt. xvi. 23). He was for the moment an opponent, an 'adversary' of the Lord, who declared that 'he savoured not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.' What can we think of Paul's 'thorn in the flesh,' which he says was a 'messenger of Satan' to buffet him, lest he 'should be exalted above measure'? In the original it is 'an angel, Satan,' the word 'of' not being expressed or implied. Surely this was not 'an angel of Satan' in the literal sense of the words! The woman who had 'a spirit of infirmity for eighteen years,' and whom the Saviour cured, is spoken of by Him as one 'whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years.' Can you think that the Arch-enemy had really and directly caused this woman's bodily infirmity? The Church at Smyrna is said to have had 'a synagogue of Satan.'

Satan's seat, or throne, and Satan's dwelling-place are said to have been at Pergamos. Construe these words literally, and you produce nonsense. Understand 'Satan' to mean what is adverse to divine truth, all falsity, and then to say that Satan's throne was in Pergamos, and his synagogue at Smyrna, is to declare an intelligible and important fact. *Vice* may sit on a throne or dwell in a synagogue; but Vice is an evil quality here personified, not a real person, called by that name, actually sitting on a throne or dwelling in a building. In the same way, the faithful in Thyatira are said not to have 'known the depths of Satan,' the secret falsities into which evil leads. Paul says he would have gone to Thessalonica, 'but Satan hindered us' (2 Thess. ii. 17, 18), meaning adverse circumstances. In this general and impersonal sense it is said of Peter, 'Satan hath desired you.' So it is said of Judas Iscariot that 'Satan' entered into him, or, in another Gospel, 'the Devil entered into his heart,' meaning, not a personal being so named, but an evil affection and a false principle, excited no doubt by devils and satans, leading him to become *a false accuser*, 'a devil,' and an *adversary*, 'a satan.' So the delivering up of a wicked and unbelieving man 'to Satan,' means the ceasing to exhort or reprove him, relinquishing him unchecked to evil and to falsity. So Satan is said to tempt to incontinence. Other 'workings of Satan' are also described. So likewise at the conversion of Paul, he was told he must turn people 'from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified.' In all these passages the falsity and evil are implied, but not the existence of a great Devil whose name is Satan."

"But the Saviour said, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.' Does not this imply a personal being so

named, who once dwelt in heaven, and who was cast out thence?" I asked.

"These words," interposed Sophos, "were said when the seventy disciples returned and declared that they had cast out demons in the Lord's name. The words are followed by the promise, 'Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and on all the power of the enemy.' Are these latter words to be understood literally? Had the Lord's disciples power to tread on literal scorpions and serpents? Were natural serpents and scorpions what is meant by the 'power of the enemy'? No. Must you then understand the first statement literally, and the context figuratively, or must you not construe the whole figuratively and spiritually? 'Satan' means all false principles which would destroy faith, overturn the Word, and lead to the rejection of God and the confirmation of evil. Such were cast down from heaven, no longer permitted to infest the human soul, or to assail the dwellers in the lower heaven. The 'serpents' on which power was given to tread signify the grovelling affections of the sensual mind; the 'scorpions' typify the false principles springing from sensual lusts. The whole passage declares, what we shall more fully talk upon, the Lord's subjugation of the hells, and judgment on the spirits in the world of spirits."

"The Lord came to subdue all affections and principles 'adverse' to genuine human happiness," added Dokeos, "and the defeat of such evil affections is represented by His casting out of 'devils;' and deliverance from such false principles is described by 'Satan' falling from heaven. Even ordinary commentators have recognised that in 'the use of the imperfect tense, and in the force of the context, the Saviour's words must refer to the triumph of the disciples over the demons.'"

## MICHAEL AND THE DRAGON.

"There still remain," I remarked, "the three statements in the Revelation: that referring to the battle in heaven between the angels of Michael and those of the dragon, the old serpent, called the Devil and Satan; that referring to his being bound in the bottomless pit; and that referring to his being loosed, tempting and deceiving the nations, and afterwards being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. What do these things mean?"

"The fourfold appellation, 'the dragon, the old serpent, called the Devil and Satan,' is given in two of the three passages," replied Dokeos. "It is, however, clear that 'dragon' and 'old serpent' are not names, but descriptive appellations: so also Devil and Satan are descriptive appellations, denoting evil and falsity in the complex or aggregate. The powers of evil and falsity were to be arrayed against the powers of goodness and truth, the dragon and his emissaries against Michael and his emissaries, the hosts of heaven against the hordes of hell, and in such a struggle who could doubt the issue? On both sides the names are the personifications of principles. There is no one great angel called Michael: there is no one great fiend called Satan. Truth fights against falsity and triumphs; goodness battles against evil and overcomes. All four principles are personified, spoken of as persons, goodness and truth as Michael, evil and falsity as the Devil and Satan: in contending that they are persons, you are in danger of forgetting the Divine symbolism of the Word, and lose altogether its real meaning."

"But 'the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan,' is spoken of as *him* when he is said to be bound for a thousand years," I urged.

"Surely, you will not contend that all things which are



personified, either in the Word or in literature, and which therefore are spoken of as 'he or him, she or her,' must therefore be persons. You might as well contend that Wisdom is *a woman* because it is so personified in the Book of Proverbs," replied Dokeos; "or that the Church is a person, because she is called the Bride, the Lamb's Wife."

"The words 'Devil' and 'Satan,'" added Sophos, "like man, woman, or angel, are nouns signifying either a multitude, or an individual. No one man is *The Man*, no one woman is *The Woman*, no one angel is *The Angel*, to exclusion of all others; and, in like manner, no one devil or Satan is *The Devil* or *The Satan*. All who inwardly are evil, and thence in falsity, are devils; all who are in falsity, and thence are evil, are Satans; so also, all those spirits who thought that they should be saved merely because they had believed in the Saviour, and whose lives gave the lie to their profession, are signified by 'the dragon,' the hypocritical crocodile grovelling in moral slime, despite its wings of intelligence: and all they who had been sunk in sensual and corporeal lusts are denoted by 'the old serpent.' All these were to be bound, separated from others, cast into the bottomless pit, till the end of the judgment in the World of spirits; when, finally, they should find their only congenial home in the ever-burning lake, not in *Hades*, but in *Gehenna*."

"But to me these are novel distinctions and strange thoughts," I exclaimed. "They overwhelm and confuse me."

"You will remember and can ponder them. Besides, we shall converse more fully of all these things," said Sophos.

## THE MORNING STARS AND SONS OF GOD.

"Let us, then, go back," I said. "We were speaking of the origin of angels, and I had quoted the Lord's words to Job, 'Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner-stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy?'"

"Are these words to be literally understood?" asked Dokeos. "Has the earth actual foundations, and a literal corner-stone? Are angels 'morning stars'? The words are figurative and symbolic. The morning stars are said to have sung together at the creation of this world, in the same sense as that expressed in the phrase 'the music of the spheres.' The sons of God are said to have shouted for joy in the same sense as the fields are said to 'smile with harvest,' or the trees to 'clap their hands.' The Lord promised to them that overcame among the Church at Thyatira that He would give them 'the morning star' (Rev. ii. 28). This surely does not mean that He will give them any pre-existent angel, or that He would give them a world. He also describes Himself as the 'morning star' (Rev. xxii. 16); the promise must therefore mean that He will give them Himself!"

"But we read the exclamation, 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cast down to the ground which didst weaken the nations' (Isa. xiv. 12). Does not this refer to the fall of one of the angels, and prove his pre-existence? Pardon me if I seem to recur to a previous topic, but I long to see clearly," I said.

"The prophet is describing the destruction of Babylon," replied Dokeos, "and, as though to render such a misin-

terpretation impossible, in the same prediction this 'day star' (*Lucifer* is the name given by translators) is said to be 'a man,' who personifies Babylon in its greatness, its pride, and in its fate; as the whole chapter plainly shows."

"Babylon," interposed Sophos, "like the earlier Babel, and also the Babylon of the Apocalypse, is the symbol in the Word for the lust of ruling the hearts, minds, and consciences of men. It is the perversion of the holy principle of self-dominion, having rule over all the faculties, desires, and dispositions of the lower nature. This self-dominion was represented by man's early 'dominion over the beasts of the earth, fowls of the air, fish of the sea, and over all things which creep upon the earth.' In this high condition, the principle of self-dominion was indeed the 'day star,' a 'son of the morning;' how fallen it became, when it was perverted and grew to be Babylon, you can easily discern."

"I am indeed instructed, O Sophos!" I exclaimed. "Tell me, then, what is the inner meaning of the words in Job?"

"Their proper and highest reference," rejoined Sophos, "is to the spiritual creation, or regeneration of man. The 'corner-stone' of the earth of man's spiritual nature is the Lord Jesus Christ; the 'stars of the morning' and the 'sons of God' are the new perceptions of Divine Love and Wisdom which arise and shine in the mind; and their singing together and shouting for joy denote the rejoicing of soul inspired by these new perceptions of goodness and truth. In the joy infused into the heart by reason of its new realizations of Divine love and mercy, all angels partake; for—behold!"

I started at this ejaculation, and looked up. Then I heard a burst of sound, as of a wondrous chorus of voices

blended in thrilling harmony; and I saw, as written in letters of burning gold, upon a milk-white scroll, the ever memorable words:—

THERE IS JOY IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ANGELS OF GOD OVER ONE SINNER THAT REPENTETH.\*

As I gazed, the words melted away; but it seemed to me henceforth that still greater majesty dwelt in and around Sophos. I was awed and silenced. For a time I lost the power of questioning, and felt disposed only to hear and to ponder.

#### THE TEMPTATION AND FALL OF MAN.

After a pause, Dokeos resumed:—"It is remarkable that so large a portion of the supposed proofs of the pre-existence of angels is based on the supposed prior existence of evil spirits. Men have toiled to rake up from the bottomless pit satisfactory evidences of angelic pre-existence. I marvel that you have not remembered the mazes of confused and intertangled thought, by which many have laboured to connect the supposed pre-existent devil with the serpent, which, in the allegorical account of the Fall, is said to have tempted the first parents of mankind."

"I am surprised that the topic escaped me," I answered, aroused at once. "But if evil originated with the Fall, of course the tempter could not have been a pre-existent devil. Yes, let us come to that subject—What is the origin of evil?"

"If the origin of evil on earth is a problem," said Dokeos, "how much greater problem would be the origin

\* Luke xv. 10.

of evil in heaven ! If it seem difficult to explain how man came to fall, how much more difficult would it be to explain how angels could fall ! They who think they get rid of the difficulties connected with the fall of man by conceiving that he was tempted by a devil, forget that they have only increased the mystery. They prompt the question,—What devil tempted the angels who, they imagine, transgressed and were cast out ? Such theorists must be driven to a belief in a long series of devils, originating either in the will of God, or in some eternally existing Evil Principle or Anti-God, some Persian *Ahriman*, or some Gnostic *hyle*."

"All things which the Lord made were 'good' ; the full development and the orderly arrangement of His works were 'very good,' " added Sophos. "Evil is not a substance, or a substantial entity ; it was not, therefore, among the creations of God. It is a *state*, not a substance ; and the evil state is that of perversion,—something wrested aside from its Divinely intended purpose, and forced into directions more or less fully opposed thereto. It is a disturbance of a Divine arrangement, a disbalancing of a divinely adjusted proportion ; no more than this. In the Divine allegory of the Fall, this disturbance is said to have been effected by the subtlety of the serpent : man ceased to be its ruler, and became its slave ; it ceased to occupy the low position assigned to it from the beginning, and became the counsellor, director, and master of man. I have previously told you that the whole of the first eleven chapters of Genesis are purely allegorical."

"Yes, and I await with eagerness confirmations and illustrations of this important statement," I rejoined.

"Before we ask what in man the serpent represents," said Sophos, "prove to him, Dokeos, that there is no

connection even hinted at between the serpent and some pre-existent devil."

"Nothing is more evident," said Dokeos. "No mention is made of such a devil assuming the serpent's form. The subtlety is said to be the serpent's own. It was the *serpent* that tempted the woman, and the woman seduced the man. It was the *serpent* that was cursed; the *serpent* that had thenceforth to go upon its belly and to eat dust. It was the *serpent* that should bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman, and whose head should be bruised by Him. Further, it is equally evident that this is the language of allegory; for the literal serpent ever did go on its belly, and it never did eat dust; it did not literally bruise the heel of the Saviour, 'the Seed of the woman;' nor did He literally bruise its head."

"The place which the serpent has occupied in the myths of all ancient races, the reverence it has inspired, and even the worship it has received, prove that the ancients regarded it as a symbol," added Sophos.

"I cannot refute this fact," I answered. "Pray explain the allegory."

"Man possesses, and must ever have possessed, various planes of life, spiritual, rational, and natural; these are severally represented in the Word by living forms; the lowest of these planes is the sensual, that plane of life which takes cognizance of outside appearances of things, receives sensations, and is the subject of sensuous and sensual emotions. These things are all good in themselves, when occupying the position originally assigned to them by the Creator. They become evil when the balance and arrangement is disturbed, and when, ceasing to be subordinate, they become paramount. The introduction of such a disturbance is a perversion of the Divine purpose and arrangement: such an introduction of perversion is the

origin of evil. The *sensual* plane of life is represented by the serpent: it is *grovelling*, for it is the lowest plane of life; it is *subtle*, because of the inevitable tendency of a merely finite intelligence to rest satisfied with the appearances of things, and to desire to rise no higher; it was intended to be subordinate, and it usurped the function of directing man. He confided in the appearances of truth, and thus rejected the actual truth; he accepted what it presented as the best and highest, and thus forfeited the highest and best. His senses and their delights became his chosen good instead of God. They soon tyrannized over him as his master; he speedily became their slave. So he fell." Thus spake Sophos.

I inclined my head, intimating that I followed him, and he resumed:—

"The serpent first addressed the womanly, the affectional, part of man's nature, his *will*, who saw that the forbidden fruit was 'pleasant to the eye and good for food, and desirable to make one wise,' so that man might be a God to himself, owning no superior, and owing no obedience of intellect, heart or life; and the *will*, 'the woman,' did eat. The will seduced the manly, the rational, the intellectual part of the human constitution, which shared the guilt of the will by conniving at the sin, and he did eat. The fall was both affectional and intellectual: the man had rejected God. Still some recollections of goodness remained, and, conscience-stricken, man fled from the presence of the Lord, the light of truth which yet shone in human minds. Then came the dire consciousness of the cause: the *serpent in him* was cursed, the sensual nature to which he had yielded should itself grovel still lower and lower, and feed, and strive to fatten while feeding, on detestable things. Its grovelling should be his, for it was the *serpent in himself* that was cursed.

The earth, his external mind and state, was also cursed : thorns and thistles of falsity and evil should it thenceforward bring forth, the consciousness of evil propensities making the labour of spiritual cultivation of his soul's soil to be painful and terrible, and ever uncertain. The soul, ever since, has never outgrown the fatal tendency to revert to the wilderness condition, the instant the labours of cultivation are suspended. Only in the sweat of his brow, only by arduous toil and through spiritual suffering, can he obtain intellectual and spiritual bread. The will, the womanly element of his soul, is also cursed : only with pain and travail can it now bring forth its spiritual sons and daughters ; and whereas once the will sprang spontaneously to the love of the eternal good, now it needs to cleave to the intellectual part of man's constitution for its support and guidance, which must rule over it, or it would go still further astray. Spontaneous love of the good is lost to man : he needs to learn what is true so as to see what is good ; and he needs to compel his will to desire and determine it."

"The explanation is suggestive, but it requires time and thought to understand it, and more still to see that it is true," I said. "What is meant by Eden, and by the trees in the garden?"

"Eden," replied Sophos, "denotes the paradisaical state of mankind in the times of pristine innocence. His soul was the garden of God, watered by the ever-flowing rivers of truth, wisdom and knowledge concerning Divine Love and Wisdom, and reason and science concerning all natural things. Man was to cultivate this garden, to develop its latent possibilities, to improve and beautify it. The trees of the garden, of all of which man was permitted to eat, represent all the intellectual perceptions



of goodness and truth, which were to serve for his spiritual food. 'A tree' signifies perception; 'to eat of every tree' signifies to know and understand from perception what is good and true. The men of the Most Ancient Church—for Adam and Eve are named, not as literal persons, but as representing all the men and women of the Most Ancient Church—had the knowledges of a true faith by means of revelations, for they conversed with the Lord, also with angels (who were men and women who had previously lived and died upon the earth, and who had been exalted by the Lord into His heavenly Kingdom), and they were also instructed by visions and dreams. Men then had from the Lord what they no longer enjoy, a continual and immediate perception of what is true and good; when they reflected on what was treasured up in their memories, they instantly perceived whether it was true and good. Whenever anything evil or false presented itself, they not only avoided and rejected it, but even regarded it with horror. Such is now the state of the angels. In the stead of this instant perception, possessed by the people of the Most Ancient Church, the knowledge of what is true and good afterwards succeeded. This relatively external knowledge was at first derived from what had been previously revealed to their forefathers; but in succeeding ages, when the human mind became still more gross and darkened by reason of the fallacies of sense, new divine revelation was given, so that men might know the truth, and be saved."

"And the two trees, that of life and that of the knowledge of good and evil," I asked, "what do they signify?"

"The tree of *lives* (the word is in the plural), of which men might eat, denotes the perception of love and faith,

and the permission to obtain a knowledge of what is good and true by means of love and faith. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies the perception of good, and also of evil, by means of the love of self and of the mere appearances of things. To eat of the fruit of this tree is to turn from God to self, to be seduced by sensual and worldly affections, to seek to judge of Divine things by means of the senses alone. This is what mankind began to do. Self-love prompted them to believe in nothing that their senses could not perceive, to reject the invisible, to deny the unknown. Sensual thought and feeling, 'the serpent,' tempted the will, the woman, to question the existence of God, to doubt His Providence, to challenge His right to rule, to deny that it was man's duty to obey. Man strove to dethrone the Deity, to become a God unto himself. 'As God in the place of God,' man's will desired to become his own law and lawgiver; and deemed that to be perfect which was the sign and proof of his imperfection. 'Man,' the rational intelligence of the people, consented thereto, and strove to find reasons for this folly and sin. Doubt took the place of faith; pride, of humility; rebellion, of obedience; the love of self usurped the function of the love of the Lord; and reliance on self-derived intelligence drove out perfect trust in God. Yet were they not altogether fallen, for they could still perceive that they were in evil; they could discern their nakedness and shame; and they could hear the voice of the Lord. Natural good still remained to them, though celestial and spiritual good had been perverted and destroyed. They were banished from Eden, for they had fallen from that high estate. The fall continued, however, and their descendants speedily perverted and profaned this natural good, and, at length, by a deluge of evils and falsities, mankind was swept away, and only

Noah and his family were preserved, a remnant and residue in the earth."

"And that was the deluge?" I asked.

"That flood of evils and falsities was itself the deluge," returned Sophos. "Remember this: he who wishes to become his own God, to acknowledge no other higher, wiser, better than himself; who desires to learn evil in order that he may know good; who worships nothing, or acknowledges no supreme worth; who attempts to grow wise from himself, his senses his only counsellors, and self-gratification his only object of life, repeats the first transgression, and shall suffer the renewal of the first curse! On the contrary, he who seeks to grow wise from the Lord, and not from the world, says in his heart, that the Lord must be believed, that is, the things which the Lord has spoken in His Word, because they are truths. According to this principle, he strives to regulate all his thoughts. He confirms himself in his belief by all rational considerations, by the conclusions of science, and by all facts derived from nature and the experience of his senses; but he rejects from his thoughts every idea which does not tend to confirm his faith in the Eternal. Such a man strives to eat of the tree of lives, and refuses to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Doubt about the necessity of obeying what we see and know to be the highest law; practical doubt, I mean, in the existence and authority of God, prompted by sensuality, and incited by the desire to become one's own deity, sovereign, and ruler, was, still is, and ever must be the first fatal step in all moral and spiritual decline. The allegory of the first Fall is a representative picture of every fall—sensuality tempts, the will yields, the intellect connives, the sin is completed, and the curse lights on the evil-doer as its unfailing, its inevitable consequence."

## THE FIRST ANGELS.

"You overpower me with new ideas," I exclaimed. "But you said that the men of the Most Ancient Church were taught by angels: there were, then, inhabitants of this world prior to the Most Ancient Church?"

Sophos by a gesture intimated to Dokeos to answer this question, and he replied:—"The human race began thousands of centuries ago; at first in low intellectual conditions, but in simple states of kindness as to their moral affections; they passed through a gradual process of spiritual development, the simple became complex, until from merely natural men and women, living like undomesticated animals, they became spiritual, and afterwards celestial. But inasmuch as moral evil, the perversion and profanation of known truth and goodness, had not been introduced into the world, when men died they ascended to heaven and became angels of God. With these angels, the men of the Most Ancient, or Celestial, Church held open and visible communion. By the means of such consociation, the states of men were continually advanced, and the joys of the angels also became more full.

"Of this spiritual 'genesis' of man the first and part of the second chapters of the Book of Genesis specifically treat. The heavens and earth were formed in man; the 'heavens' in his interior nature, 'the earth' in his external nature and mind. From being at first 'without form and void' the earth of man's nature was developed by the wonder-working hand of the Creator; and day's work by day's work the Divine operation advanced, still always in man. Generation followed generation of continually progressive human beings, till man was made celestial in affection, perception, and thought; then the Eternal is

said to have rested from His labour of developing mankind ; for the inmost and highest planes of human nature had then been opened. Man was then said to have been placed in Eden, and thenceforward was possible an unending increase in that highest plane of human consciousness. Till this time there were no devils, for there was no evil ; and all who died became angels."

"Then, according to this view," I remarked, "death came into the world before the fall of man."

"The death of the body, yes," rejoined Dokeos ; "but not spiritual death, the extinction in the soul of all spiritual life, the incoming of evil, and banishment from the presence of God. Death has always trodden on the heels of life in this world. The earth was never designed to be the eternal habitation of man : it is the birthplace of human, rational and free beings ; and was fashioned to be the seminary of heaven. Man's body did not die in 'the day' that he ate of the forbidden fruit. Christ hath not redeemed mankind from the death of the body. In the earth, space is limited in extent, and matter in quantity ; therefore the increase of mankind could only have extended up to a certain point, when there must have come a pause, and that pause would have been death. Death is the gate of life : souls are developed in mortal tabernacles in the lower world, but their eternal homes are in the spiritual world, where extension is unlimited, and where duration, not time, marks its epochs by changes of state alone."

#### THE LORD TOOK NOT THE NATURE OF ANGELS.

"I am burdened by this incoming of thoughts," I exclaimed. "They are new to me, and if true, how grand and enlightening ! Permit me yet another question.

Paul said that the Saviour took not upon Himself the nature of angels, but was made a little lower than the angels, and took upon Himself the seed of Abraham. How can I understand this?"

"The angels are glorified men in spiritual bodies, living in the spiritual world," replied Sophos; "our Lord took on Himself a material body, and dwelt in the earth. He was thus made a little lower than the angels; for He became a Divine Man in the ultimate things of nature and the natural world: a Divine Man in Last principles as He was eternally a Divine Man in First principles, and thus He is 'the First and the Last.' But this statement says nothing as to the pre-existence or origin of angels."

#### THE CHERUBIMS.

"But we read of the cherubims," I urged; "what are they? Are they not angels? And the four living creatures mentioned in the Apocalypse, who 'rest not day and night, saying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come!' what are they?"

"Cherubims are never called angels," replied Dokeos. "Those which Ezekiel saw he has most fully described, and these had the likeness of a man, but with four faces, that of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle; they had four wings, with straight feet like those of a calf; their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps, that went up and down among the living creatures; who went and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning. Connected with them were four wheels full of eyes round about, in which was the spirit of these living creatures; and when they went, the prophet heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty; and he knew that they were

the cherubims. These are not 'angels,' they are not sent as 'messengers' from the Almighty : they accompany Him, as being His chariot,—as the Psalmist teaches, 'He rode upon a cherub and did fly.' These, therefore, are not angels, and their existence does not prove that angels were created prior to man."

"What then are they?" I demanded, turning to Sophos.

"Representative forms, imaging in the ultimate plane, so as to be seen by the prophet, the proceeding spheres of the Divine Wisdom," rejoined Sophos. "The four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind, mentioned in the Apocalypse, in like manner represent the all-seeing providence of the Lord. Each particular statement has its specific representative value and meaning—the face of the *lion* denotes the ultimate representation of the power and effect of Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord ; that of the *calf* represents the appearance in ultimates of Divine Good as to defence ; that of the *man* signifies appearance in ultimates of the Lord's Divine Providence as to Wisdom ; and that of the *eagle* symbolizes the appearance in ultimates of the Divine Providence as to Intelligence, and circumspection in every direction. Together, the four faces image the fulness and perfection of the Divine Wisdom in all its aspects. The 'wings folded about them' denote how the Divine Providence conceals and clothes inmost purposes with external appearances ; and seems to be motionless and inactive, while yet it operates in all things. Their cry of 'Holy, Holy, Holy' affirms the perfect holiness or goodness of the Lord, and declares that He alone is the Infinite and Eternal. The placing of such a cherub in the garden of Eden, to defend the way to the Tree of Lives, signifies the watchful care of Divine Providence, lest the wicked should obtain an

insight into heavenly truths, which they would profane. A similar guardianship is expressed in the Lord's words in Isaiah, 'Go tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes' (Isa. vi. 9, 10); or as the Lord also said to His disciples, 'Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand' (Luke viii. 10)."

"By means of such representative forms," added Sophos, after a long pause, "were manifested to the opened sight of seers and prophets symbols of Divine attributes, qualities, and perfections; not as declaring that such representative forms possess an independent and continued existence, but as symbolic embodiments before the seers of the Divine principles which they represent. Every particular detail of such representatives is significant, and their meaning can be interpreted and explained by the Science of Correspondences, of which I have before spoken."

#### COROLLARY.

"Remember then," said Dokeos, "that all angels and all devils began their existence on an earth, either your earth or another; that they were once men, even as you are; that the material plane is the foundation and beginning-place of all existence; that from the lowest plane of existence there is a continual effort upwards, a returning of the chain of being toward the Creator; that this effort in the vegetable and animal kingdoms is shown in the ascending approximation of all forms to the highest and most perfect, the human form; that thus all lower things




were prophetic of man, who realized in himself the typical predictions and prefigurations of all created things. This is man's place in nature, and nature's meaning as it points to man. Remember, further, that man is the meeting-place of both the natural and the spiritual worlds; that in him God has fashioned a being of a new order, endowed with rationality, free determination, and destined to live for ever; that he belongs to the spiritual world even more than to the natural, and is continually being claimed by it; that his eternal home will be the spiritual world, but to which he could only attain by beginning existence at the basis of life, that he might take from the world of nature its more subtle and purest substances to form the cutaneous covering, the outermost envelope, of the substantial body of his spirit, so that his inmost essence might have an external boundary or circumscription. Remember, likewise, that his life struggle here is between the fallacies of sense and eternal truths, the seductions of the flesh and the Divine laws, the love of self and of the world, and the contrary loves of God and the neighbour. According as he acquits himself in the fight will he become, in the next life, an angel or an infernal; and that as an infernal, he will be either a devil or a satan, according as evil or falsity have predominated in his soul. It was needful that you should thus learn what angels are before you could rightly learn what angels do."



## CHAPTER III.

### SEERSHIP.

“ SOPHOS! O Dokeos!” I exclaimed. “I asked for teachers, and am only wishful to be taught. When you depart from me I shall have opportunities of meditating upon your instructions, and of striving to understand them. While you are with me continue to teach.”

“Intelligence comes by earnest meditation,” said Sophos. “We can but communicate ideas; whether others will perceive their truth, and make them their own, depends partly upon their states as to thought, and partly on their states as to affection. The truly wise see; their ‘yea is yea,’ their ‘nay is nay.’ The intelligent reflect and reason. They who are only learned absorb the knowledges which the wise or the intelligent may communicate. But men must learn before they become intelligent, and they must become intelligent before they can grow wise. Such is the order of wisdom.”

“I rank among the learners then,” I replied. “Teach me what was the nature of the power which they possessed, to whom this seeing of angels and spirits was possible?”

"You ask me," said Sophos, "what is the nature of seership? What saith the Word?"

Again I heard a chorus of voices, the singers remaining invisible, and I saw as in letters of burning gold, on a pale, blue scroll, these words :—

BEFORETIME IN ISRAEL, WHEN A MAN WENT TO ENQUIRE OF GOD, THUS HE SPAKE, COME, AND LET US GO TO THE SEER; FOR HE THAT IS NOW CALLED A PROPHET WAS BEFORETIME CALLED A SEER.\*

"A seer," said Dokeos, "is one 'whose spiritual sight has been opened,' and who thus has been enabled to behold the things of the spiritual world."

"What sight? How opened?" I demanded.

#### SPIRITUAL SIGHT.

"There are three kinds of sight," said Sophos. "One is the natural sight, with which all men are familiar. Yet this natural vision is really the mind's consciousness of the images reflected upon the retina of the eye. It is the spirit which sees by means of the eyes and optic nerve, and hears by means of the auditory apparatus. To say that the *eye* sees or the *ear* hears is to speak merely according to appearances; for when the soul has departed from the body there is neither sight in the eye nor hearing in the ear. So also it is the real man, the spiritual being, who acts by means of his hands, speaks by means of his vocal apparatus, and thinks in the body by means of the brain. It must never be overlooked that man *is* a spirit and *has* a body; and that the body is not the man, but is adjoined to the man as a

\* 1 Sam. ix. 9.

material instrument, so that by its means he may live in the natural world, and take part in its concerns.

“There is, secondly, intellectual sight, or mental perception, the faculty of seeing whether certain things are true or false. A thousand matters, altogether invisible to physical sight, can yet be discerned by the sight of the mind. To the former, the surface, structure, form, and colour of things are alone visible; while to mental sight, beauty, harmony, arrangement, causes, and purposes are visible. Whatsoever is remembered, describable, or conceivable, serve as objects of mental sight.

“There is, thirdly, spiritual sight, distinctively so called; the sight proper to man’s spirit, and which his spirit will possess after the man has passed, by death, out of the natural into the spiritual world. It must be evident that the spiritual bodies of men, in the other world, possess all the senses which their natural bodies possessed in the natural world; and that their powers of sensation are far more acute than those which they possessed in their physical bodies. Spiritual bodies see, hear, smell, taste, and touch; it would be a mockery of all the experience of their earth-life, and by no means an exaltation in state, were it otherwise. But sensations of necessity imply the existence and activity of organs of sensation; and we cannot conceive of any other organ of sight than the eye, or of hearing than the ear, and so of all the others. Hence we must conclude that such organs of sensation are possessed by the spiritual bodies of men in the spiritual world. Both in the spiritual and the natural world men possess the power of intellectual sight, or mental perception; but this is no more than a consciousness of a process of thought taking place within the mind. In addition to this, men possess the power of seeing objects

which are external to themselves, and such objects exist by myriads in both worlds.

“All kinds of sight, of necessity, imply three things,—an organ of sight, objects of sight, and light by means of which those objects are illuminated and made visible. Light emitted by the natural sun, shining upon objects in the natural plane, renders visible to natural eyes the things which they see. The intellectual light of truth, shed forth by the ‘Sun of Righteousness,’ shining on objects of thought, enables the ‘mind’s eye’ to see the matters which it discerns. Spiritual light in the spiritual world, shining on the objects which there exist, reveals to the eyes of the spirit those objects which they there behold.

“Although the real man or spirit, so long as he dwells in the world, is covered with a physical body, the spirit exists within the body in a perfect human form. The spirit possesses those organs of sensation which are proper to itself, though they are temporarily closed; so that men, generally, do not become aware of the presence of the spiritual beings who are about them. Yet there is ever a possibility of these organs of sense proper to the spirit being ‘opened,’ as we term it, so that man might see, hear, and converse with spirits and angels. The organs of sensation exist, the spiritual persons or objects exist, the light by which they are revealed to each other ever shines; and the true reason why man so rarely perceives those objects is because during his earth-life his spiritual organs of sensation are almost uniformly closed.

“It was not always thus. It has not been thus in the case of every man in any age of the world. In the most ancient times these spiritual organs of sensation were all open, so that the human race had conscious intercourse with spirits and angels, in addition to intellectual sight,

and the sight proper to the body. The communion of the church on the earth and in the heavens was then open, untrammelled and visible. One generation of men could behold the spiritual bodies of those who had been their earthly ancestors, and could gain knowledge from their instructions. In the course of ages, in proportion as mankind grew worse and worse in state, sunk themselves more and more deeply in worldly and corporeal affections, became more and more exclusively of the earth earthy, this visible communion ceased. That which had been the heritage of all became the inheritance of only a few; and gradually this few decreased in number, and their gift became less normal and less certain. Then, only at long intervals and on rare occasions, there arose a man who possessed and could exercise this once universal power. Among such, every variety in degree and in continuance of the gift is discernible; and the value of their disclosures as to what they see and hear is determinable according to the degree in which they possessed the faculty of spiritual sight or hearing, the class of spirits with whom they were associated, and the period during which their gift continued.

“The possibility, however, of thus seeing and conversing with spirits has never ceased with any man. All men are potentially seers. Whenever it pleases the Lord the eyes and ears of any man’s spirit can be opened, so that he may see the things of the spiritual world as well as spirits and angels, and even devils, and may also converse with them and hear them speak. Those to whom this faculty has been specially given, and who have thus been permitted to see and converse with spirits and angels, for the purpose that they might instruct others in the truths of the Word, are called SEERS.”

“Your communication is most interesting and sugges-

tive," I said. "Permit, however, one question: Will such open intercourse ever again become common?"

"Few, at this day, are able to converse with spirits and angels, because so few are conjoined to the Lord by faith and love, and, without such conjunction, the opening of the spiritual organs of sensation is most dangerous," replied Sophos. "Manifestly, then, when such a conjunction with the Lord is re-established, as in future ages it will be, when no man shall need to say to his fellows 'Know the Lord! for all shall know Him from the least even to the greatest,' then such intercourse will be resumed; but to speak with spirits is hurtful, unless the man be in genuine faith and charity, and be led thereto of the Lord."

#### PROPHETS AND SEERS.

"Were all the prophets seers?" I asked.

Sophos gestured to Dokeos to reply to me, and he said,—

"Not all; nor were all seers prophets. There is no proof that Hosea, Joel, Micah, Zephaniah, Haggai, or Malachi were seers. Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah, among the prophets who wrote, were markedly seers. Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, and various others among the prophets who did not write, were unmistakably seers, and many are even described as 'seers.' Hence we must make a distinction between seership and the prophetic office; and also between prophets whose prophetic mission was special and local merely, and those who were employed by the Infinite Wisdom as instruments for writing His Word, 'which abideth for ever.' The faculty of seeing does not depend on the moral goodness of him who may possess it. Thus

Balaam was a seer, though there is no evidence that he was a good man, all the proof indeed being rather to the contrary. Yet he describes himself as 'the man whose eyes are open' (Numb. xxxiv. 3). We also read of Zadok the priest who was likewise a seer (2 Sam. xv. 17); of Gad the seer (2 Sam. xxiv. 11); of Heman the seer (1 Chron. xxv. 5); of Iddo the seer; of Hanani the seer; of Asaph the psalmist and seer; of Jeduthun the king's seer; of the seers that spake to Manasseh; and, further, of the 'sayings of the seers.'

"Is there any proof in the Word," I asked, "that the seeing of angels was effected by the opening of the spiritual eyes of the person who beheld them?"

"Your reverence for the Word, and your anxiety to test every statement by its Divine declarations," interrupted Sophos, "is most wise. He who cleaveth to the Word shall never go astray."

"The only case," resumed Dokeos, "recorded in the Word in which any explanation is given of the means by which the seers saw, explicitly declares that this was the method. Elisha, the prophet and seer, had been pursued by the Assyrian soldiers; during the night they surrounded the city where he was, and when his servant arose early in the morning, he beheld the host, and said to his master, 'Alas, my master! how shall we do?' Elisha comforted him. 'Fear not,' he said, 'for *they that be with us* are more than *they that be with them*.' Then it is recorded that Elisha prayed and said, 'Lord, I pray Thee, *open his eyes that he may see*. And the Lord *opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw*, and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha' (2 Kings vi. 15-17). Elisha had seen; for was he not a SEER? The young man's eyes were opened, and then he too became temporarily possessed of this power of seership."



"The passage is striking," I observed, "and seems final. I had been taught to think, however, that angels rendered themselves visible by temporarily assuming to themselves some kind of material substance, with which they clothed their invisible forms, so as to reflect light, and thus they were made objects of natural sight."

"There is no justification in the Word of such an hypothesis," rejoined Dokeos. "On the contrary, in describing the apostasy of Israel and its consequences, it is said, 'The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath *closed your eyes* ; the prophets and your rulers, the seers, hath He covered' (Isa. xxix. 10). On the grounds of probability, which is the more reasonable,—that this power of incorporating to themselves material elements should be possessed by the angels, or that the eyes of the seer's spirit should be opened?"

"The latter, surely," I replied.

"There may and must be, as Sophos has said, gradations of seership," added Dokeos. "Some in whom the faculty is only partially opened ; some in whom it is opened only occasionally, and then with more or less completeness ; some in whom it is a general condition ; some most highly favoured ones in whom the spiritual organs of sensation are as fully and as constantly opened as are the similar organs of their bodies, and who are thus fitted to be links of connection between the natural and spiritual world, open-eyed witnesses to the reality of a life after death, and teachers of men on many subjects connected with the spiritual world."

I sighed as the half-formed thought flashed across my mind, "Would that I too could be such a seer!"

## HEAVENLY SPIRITUALISM.

Sophos gazed upon me earnestly and discerned my thought. "The gift is not one which should be desired; and certainly it should not be sought," he said. "Its exercise is surrounded with many spiritual and moral dangers. The Jews were forbidden to suffer a necromancer—one who communes with the dead—to live, to show the danger of spiritual death incurred by those who possessed the power in the low spiritual state, as to faith and love, which then, and which indeed still prevails. You have the Divine Word; seek unto that! You have the consociation and guardianship of angels; rest in that! You can have conjunction with the Lord; rely on that! You can have subjective communication with the spiritual world by way of suggested thoughts, reawakened trains of reflection, the recalling to your remembrance of the words of Divine Truth, the stirring up and drawing out of whatever remains in your soul of early states of innocence, charity, tenderness, faithfulness, desires of usefulness and of love, through which you have passed, and which are never wholly lost: strive to realize all this! To seek after objective communication with the spiritual world, to labour to cultivate or develop in yourself any faculty of seership you may possess, breeds—have I not observed it a hundred times!—spiritual pride, haughtiness, and the desire to exercise spiritual dominion. Men are in closest consociation with those spirits, good or evil, which are in fullest harmony with their own states: to openly commune with such only tends to confirm and establish such states; and thus it tends to retard spiritual progress in the attainment of heavenly graces, which are virtues in angels only because they are Divine attributes and excellences in the Lord."

"There is, therefore, mercy shown by the Lord in closing up the faculty, so long as the spiritual states of men are so predominately evil, as that its exercise would increase their jeopardy, without at all promoting their regeneration in the love and practice of goodness," added Dokeos.

"But," I urged, "would not conviction be wrought in many minds as to the future life, were the faculty more fully possessed, and its observations were more copiously recorded?"

"What saith the Word?" demanded Sophos.

I heard again the heavenly chorus, and in refulgent characters, standing out as though written on the very atmosphere in lines of blazing whiteness, I seemed to see the words:—

IF THEY HEAR NOT MOSES AND THE PROPHETS,  
NEITHER WILL THEY BE PERSUADED THOUGH ONE ROSE  
FROM THE DEAD!\*

"Conviction as to the reality of a future life might certainly be produced in men by such means," said Sophos most gravely; "but to be *convinced of the certainty of a life after death*, and to be *persuaded to turn from their evils* that they may inherit eternal life, are not the same things. Far otherwise. How many believe, and yet love iniquity! Let the lives of the thousands of profaners of the truth declare it! Knowledge of the truth is precious: let none underrate its value! Yet far more precious and valuable is a life in accordance with the truths that each man knows."

There rushed across my consciousness the remembrance of my own many omissions, negligences, and

\* Luke xvi. 31.

transgressions, and that, too, despite my knowledge and convictions, and I was silenced and melted. "Thank God," I murmured, "there is mercy for the penitent!"

"Miracles," added Sophos, "are not now wrought because they compel belief; but the internal man cannot be affected by compulsion, seeing that nothing enters into its state save by intellectual ideas. If ideas were derived from miracles and they were afterwards dissipated, there would then take place in the soul a conjunction of the false and the true, which is most grievous profanation. The economy of Divine Providence is right; for He seeks to lead men in intellectual and spiritual freedom to the knowledge, love, and practice of the truth. Human progress is thereby rendered slow; but the progress is real. The after-life will reveal that the Lord's ways were best."

#### SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE SEERSHIP.

"There is one question I should like to ask," I observed, breaking a long silence; "it is as to the illustrations of seership recorded in the Word:—Were these visions all objective, *i.e.* the actual seeing of real objects existing in the spiritual world? or, were not many of them subjective merely, *i.e.* the passing before the mind of the seer such a train of thoughts, so vividly perceived, in an intellectual way, as to *seem* to him as though they were objective, while they were really subjective only? or, were the visions partly objective and partly subjective?"

"The spiritual visions of the prophets," replied Sophos, "were objective, that is, things seen, not by the mental sight, which is what you term subjective seeing, but by the opened eyes of the spirit. The things they saw were representatives of heavenly things, actually produced in the spiritual world into which the seers were for the time

intromitted. It is, however, necessary to observe that one great law rules all such visions :—men see the objects of the spiritual world only according to their own state ; thus when the Lord appeared to the whole congregation on Mount Sinai, that appearance was a vision seen in one form by Moses, in another form by Aaron, and in yet another by the people. Spiritual sight thus, in some degree, partakes of the nature of intellectual sight, while it also resembles bodily vision. It resembles the latter in so far as the common, ordinary objects of the spiritual world would be visible to all spirits and seers : it also resembles intellectual perception, because a thousand objects which would be actually invisible to a less instructed or less perceptive mind would be openly visible to the wiser and more perceptive. In that world, therefore, the truth, which in the natural world is subjective chiefly,—that ‘man sees only what he brings eyes to see,’ is, in the spiritual world, wrought out into objectiveness ; or, in other words, each there sees only according to his state. This difference exists between natural and spiritual objects of sight, that whereas the fixity of matter gives stability to all the objects of natural sight, so that all who see at all see the same general outline, form, and colour of things, the differences being as to distance, intensity, comprehensiveness, and intelligence of vision ; in the spiritual world things take objective form and colour, qualities and appearances, according to the subjective mental state of the beholder. The field of view, and the things within that field of view, to two spirits, though standing and conversing together, might be as to all kinds of particulars quite different, though, so long as they remained together, the general features of the field of view might appear the same to one as to another. Do I make my meaning clear to you ?”

"I think I see your idea," I replied.

"Your reply illustrates my meaning," rejoined Sophos. "In your natural state, in the natural world, you can only intellectually see, or understand the thought I have been trying to express. Were you in the spiritual world, objective forms could be made to appear before your spirit's sight to illustrate and embody the truths of which I have spoken. In that world you could both subjectively perceive and objectively see the things which I see, or as you rightly term it 'my idea.' Apply, now, this law, which I repeat is universal, to the subject of which we were speaking :—according as the perception of the seer was more interior, and his state more elevated, the visions he could behold were both more comprehensive and more perfect. His subjective state would determine, to some extent, his objective perceptions. He who was in the highest subjective condition would, consequently, see more full, more diversified, and more interior things."

"But were we to apply such a test to the prophets of the Word?" I asked :—

"We should have gained an explanation of the problem, why God should have chosen different men, of diverse character, at separate times, and writing in various external styles, to be His several mouthpieces to mankind ; why in the letter the Divine Word differs, in the several books, in style and manner ; why some of the prophets were the vehicles through whom the Lord communicated much, while through others He communicated but little of His Divine Wisdom ; why, for example, the Lord should have selected John to be the seer of the Apocalypse in preference to Peter, or any other of the apostles. He ever selected the most fitting instrument ; and the question of fitness was determined, as alone it was determinable, by the interior state of the instrument who was

chosen. In each case the instrument chosen was the fittest, and the Word spoken to him, or rather through him, and by him written down, was Divine in its origin ; and also in its interior significations ; and likewise in the letter. While this is true, we must perceive differences in the form and style of the letter of the Word, which, without the basis of such an explanation, it would be impossible to understand."

"As to this external mode and form, then," I inquired, "there were differences in the visions and revelations recorded in the Word?"

"Beyond all question, yes!" replied Sophos emphatically. "The dreams mentioned in the Word well illustrate the point. Some of them were what you term subjective, —vivid presentations before the mind of the dreamer of thoughts which, when intellectually seen by him, seemed to be objective realities, as though actually before his eyes. Some of the 'visions of the night,' during sleep, were in part subjective, and in part objective,—things thought of and also things actually seen mingling accordantly together. The 'visions of the day,' permitted in a state of wakefulness as to the bodily organs, were of objective things rendered visible to the spiritual sight, or the sight of the spirit. So also of hearing : some things were heard internally, or within the man, as when it was written, 'The Lord said,' or 'Thus saith the Lord'; some were heard outwardly, as proceeding from a spirit or an angel actually speaking ; in some cases, the angel or spirit who spoke was visible, so that both the sense of sight and hearing were then opened ; and in other instances the speaker remained invisible, only the sense of hearing being in such cases opened."

"And this variety was determined by what?" I asked.

"Difference in the state of the seer," responded Sophos ;

"and also variety of purpose in the vision that was seen, or the speech that was heard. Most of the visions described in the Word, however, are manifestly objective—visions of things actually made visible to the opened spiritual sight of the prophet, who, in that case, was also a seer. Such things as the seer then beheld were likewise seen by the angels or spirits with whom he was conversing. This last-named fact, perhaps, may best illustrate the difference between perceptions which are subjective to the person who perceives them, and visions that are of objective things: because objective, they could be seen by those spiritual beings who were in company with the prophet and seer, and also by the prophet and seer himself."

When Sophos had concluded, Dokeos broke the silence that ensued. "Were not the fact as Sophos has just now stated it," he said, "men on earth could know nothing concerning the things of the spiritual world which are visible to those who dwell there. Were all prophetic visions no more than descriptions of a course and current of, what you term, subjective impressions, one purpose of the Divine Word would be defeated, which was to acquaint mankind with the realities that await them in the life after death. Whatsoever, therefore, is said in the Word on such subjects is to be regarded as truly descriptive of the actual, the objective, truth as to the things which appear in the spiritual world to those who inhabit that world."

"True," said Sophos; "and even where the impression was received inwardly, and not outwardly, the things impressed on the mind of their percipient were in perfect agreement with the things which outwardly appear in the spiritual world; for the laws of mind and the laws of the spiritual world are one in kind, however they may vary in form and mode."





## CHAPTER IV.

### THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

**U**MUSED for a little while on what I had heard, striving rather to recall the conclusions which had been stated, and to fix them in my memory, than to examine whether they were true.

“The spiritual world, then, according to these teachers, is a real substantial world, or plane of existence; it is inhabited by real men who possess bodies composed of spiritual substance, having all the organs of sense which are possessed by the natural body; all these spiritual men were once human beings who had previously lived on an earth, on our earth or another; some of these are devils and some angels; neither angels nor devils were created such, but each has determined his own destiny by the character of his life in the world; there is no personal devil, no fallen archangel, no Anti-God, scarcely inferior to God though utterly antagonistic to Him in purpose; seership was once a universal privilege or faculty; it has been closed by reason of sin, and may again be universally opened by reason of righteousness; at present the faculty is still possessed by a few men in almost every generation, though, in such cases, it does

not depend on moral goodness ; there is an orderly and heavenly spiritualism, which all men should seek to cultivate ; sight in the spiritual world depends, to some extent, on the subjective states of those who see, although there are objects in that world which all discern ; the visions recorded in the Divine Word were made visible by the opening of the spirit-sight of those who beheld them, and thus were providentially designed to acquaint us with the character of the spiritual world, to illustrate its laws, and thus to intellectually prepare us for partaking in its concerns. These are stupendous and amazing ideas : if true, how important ! if false, how seductive ! At present it is for me to learn, not to discuss ; the opportunity for investigation will come afterwards. But both Sophos and Dokeos have used a third word, 'spirits,'—angels, devils, 'and spirits': who and what are these 'spirits'?"

I raised my head, and observed that while I had been thus musing both Sophos and Dokeos had withdrawn themselves to a considerable distance from me, and that I saw them far less distinctly than before. As I looked toward them, however, they immediately approached me.

"Sophos," I said ; "you have spoken of 'spirits' as distinguished in some way from both angels and devils. You have also spoken of such 'spirits' as being 'good and evil.' Tell me, then, what are the differences you express in these distinctions?"

"Most willingly," responded Sophos. "The Spiritual World is separated into three great divisions. One of these is heaven, or rather heavens, for there are three heavens, each of which is divided into two great kingdoms, and innumerable societies. Another of these divisions is hell, or rather the hells, for there are more

than one. The third of these divisions is the World of Spirits, or the Intermediate State, into which all who die in the natural world first enter, and where they remain for longer or shorter periods, till they are judged, when whatever is of good is separated from whatsoever is of evil in the state of each individual spirit, and the good are finally separated from the wicked. The *good*, those who have lived in accordance with the light of truth which they possessed in the world, ascend from this Intermediate State into the heavenly society with which they were previously conjoined, and find their eternal home in the heaven for which their spiritual state of love, or wisdom, or obedience has fitted them; and thenceforward they are numbered among the angels of God. While they were in the World of Spirits, these were 'good spirits,' but who had not yet attained their final abode in the heavens. The wicked, those who, in the natural world, have loved iniquity and have continually sinned against the light of truth which they possessed, are in the World of Spirits deprived of the knowledges of truth which they had perverted; they fly from the light of heaven, and precipitate themselves into the hell for which their lives had fitted them, and dwell in the infernal society with which they, by their life of evil in the natural world, had previously connected themselves. They had been wicked or 'evil spirits' during their temporary sojourn in the Intermediate State; when they enter hell they become infernal spirits, or devils. This, then, is the distinction I expressed."

"But is there such an Intermediate State?" I asked.

"Its existence is grounded in the very nature of spiritual things," rejoined Sophos. "In the spiritual world men are arranged and distributed according to their states. Heaven is the state of love and wisdom, into

which there can enter nothing which defileth; similarly, those who enter into heaven are in corresponding states of wisdom and love. Hell is the state of evil and falsity, into which there can enter nothing that is good or true; similarly, those who go to hell are in accordant states of falsity and evil. The condition both of angels and of devils is homogeneous. The angels are as wise as they are loving, and as loving as they are wise; in them, goodness finds its conjugal partner truth, and the marriage union of goodness and truth is eternally consummated in the soul of each. So likewise the infernals are as deeply immersed in darkness as they are sunk in evil; evil in them seeks its congenial associate falsity, and the monstrous union of evil and falsity is consummated in the soul of each. When man enters the spiritual world, his internal or spiritual state is intermediate; and, consequently, the region into which he enters is the 'Intermediate State.' No soul is so pure that it has no infirmities; no soul is so corrupt as to have closed itself against all knowledge. Few indeed are prepared to ascend immediately into the society of angels; and but few are ready to rush headlong into the hells. The state of these new comers being thus mixed, where can they dwell save in an 'Intermediate State'? Here they must remain until the spiritual condition of each becomes homogeneous; in the case of the good, truth being gained, infirmities not in harmony with their ruling affection being vastated or removed, and thus they are fitted for heaven: in the case of the wicked, truth being lost, impulses not in harmony with their ruling love being quenched, and thus they fit themselves for hell. The Intermediate State in the spiritual world therefore grows out of the very condition of those who enter into that world; for, because their state is one of mingled good

and evil, wisdom and error, they must needs enter into a condition in harmony with their state."

"This appears reasonable," I remarked, when Sophos paused.

Dokeos took up the word. "It is reasonable, and it is true," he said.

"I had thought, however, that the doctrine of the Intermediate State was exploded by Protestantism, revolting against the sordid uses to which the older doctrine of 'Purgatory' had been put by wily and wicked priests," I replied.

"What have we to do with 'Protestantism' or 'Purgatory'? We are here seekers after the truth of things, heedless of the points of contact or of divergence between what we learn and teach, and the opinions of others," said Dokeos, with a sweet smile. "Yet, to give you proof of the truth, explore your own memory, and endeavour to see the evidence there is that the older church, despite its perversion to purposes of priest-craft of the truth concerning the middle state, has been wiser than Protestantism in regard to this subject."

A flood of remembrances gained from former reading came upon me, and I said,—

"The early Christian writers undoubtedly believed in a middle state. Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Augustine, Eusebius, Cyril, and others of the Fathers, most indisputably held the doctrine as true. The so-called Apostles' Creed declares of the Saviour that 'He descended into *hades*,' the place of the departed, which is neither heaven nor hell. Of course the Greeks believed in such a middle state, for they described it by the word '*hades*,' which was neither the Elysian Fields nor Tartarus. In adopting this word *hades*, the idea it expresses has been adopted into the New Testament.

And now I think, even those who believe that the judgment will take place on the earth must admit a middle state which is neither heaven nor hell, wherein the spirits of all may dwell pending their coming to judgment."

"Still further explore your memory, and produce what you find there," said Dokeos.

"I have read that the word *Sheol* is used in the Hebrew Old Testament sixty-five times. We sometimes translate it *grave*, and sometimes *hell*; but Josephus informs us, in his discourse to the Greeks, that it means 'the place wherein the souls of both the righteous and the unrighteous are detained.' I remember also to have read that personal pronouns are never applied to *Sheol*, as 'my, thy, his, or our, your or their,' *grave*; but that whenever such an idea is expressed as to need these pronouns, the proper Hebrew word for grave, *keber*, is employed, and not *Sheol*; thus showing that *Sheol* really signifies not 'the grave,' but 'the place of departed spirits,' and which is neither heaven nor hell. So Jacob said, 'I will go unto *Sheol* mourning' (Gen. xxxvii. 35); meaning that he would go, not to the grave, but to the place of the departed. So the Psalmist says, 'God will redeem my soul from the power of *Sheol*' (Psa. xlix. 15); meaning, not the *grave*, for the soul goes not thereinto, but the place of the departed, into which enter the spirits of all flesh. Yes," I continued, with some little mental excitement, "I remember a still more striking instance. David says of the Lord, 'Thou wilt not leave My soul in *Sheol*, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption' (Psa. xvi. 10); and in the Apostle's quotation of the passage, on the Day of Pentecost, it is written, 'Thou wilt not leave My soul in *hades*' (Acts ii. 31); thus showing that *Sheol* and *hades* were in the estimation of Peter equivalent terms; and that what the Hebrew

means by the one term the Greek expresses by the other. Both words, consequently, must express the place of the departed, or what you style the 'Intermediate State,' the state into which all first enter immediately after death, and which, although in the spiritual world, is neither heaven nor hell."

"You reason wisely," said Sophos. "Proceed."

"I remember also that *hades* in the New Testament is certainly not expressive of the final abode of the wicked. *Gehenna* expresses that idea, a figurative word derived from the Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem, into which offal and refuse were cast, and where vast fires were kept continually burning. *Tartarōsas* is used in the questionable passage in Peter's Epistle about the angels who sinned, which we previously considered. So also we read of 'death and *hades*' delivering up their dead, and of both death and *hades* being cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 13, 14); a clear proof that *hades* cannot mean what is expressed by hell."

"You have not thought of a still stronger proof," said Dokeos. "Peter says, 'For Christ also hath once suffered, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit; by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing' (1 Pet. iii. 18-20). These spirits in prison were not in hell."

"Oh," I exclaimed, "interpret that to me most mysterious statement! Who were these spirits? Where were their prisons? When did the Saviour preach to them? For what purpose? Some say that this preaching was done through the instrumentality of Noah, who was 'a preacher of righteousness.'"

"That phrase is taken from the apocryphal Book of Enoch, of which we have before spoken," replied Dokeos. "But the spirits are described as being in prison at the time when they were 'preached unto.' Hence, the preaching could not have been that of Noah, for when he preached to them they were men and women in the flesh, and not in prison. It is further evident that the Saviour must have preached, or the connection of the passage is broken. Their prisons must have been in *hades*, not in hell; the intermediate, and not the final, state of those spoken of. The preaching took place subsequently to the Saviour's crucifixion, when He had descended into *hades*. These spirits included all ancient unbelievers since the days of Noah, who had not yet gone to their final abode, and of whom those of the days of Noah are specifically mentioned. The object and purpose of this preaching may be learned from another statement of Peter: 'For this cause was the Gospel [of glad tidings in Jesus Christ our Lord] *preached also to them that are dead*, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit' (1 Pet. iv. 6); that is, that there might be an equality of light in order that there might be an equality of judgment. Who can doubt that the message of the Saviour was a message of mercy to these imprisoned spirits?"

"I cannot doubt that," I answered.

"These spirits were not in heaven; they were not in hell; they were in the spiritual world: therefore they must have been in the intermediate state, which we call the world of spirits; and, consequently, there must be such an intermediate state."

"It seems beyond refutation, Dokeos," I replied.

"But what of those spirits in prison?"



"Bear with me yet a moment," returned Dokeos. "Speaking of David, Peter declared that 'he had not yet ascended into the heavens' (Acts ii. 34). Where was he then? Not in hell; not in heaven; yet in the spiritual world: hence there must be an intermediate state, which is neither heaven nor hell."

"True," I rejoined; "and now I think of it, 'the spirits under the altar,' mentioned by the seer of the Apocalypse, who had been slain for the Word of God, who cried, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not avenge our blood?' who were commanded to 'rest yet for a little season,' and to whom white robes were given, could not have been in heaven, and they certainly were not in hell; and, therefore, there must be an intermediate state in which they dwelt."

#### THE SCENE OF THE APOCALYPSE.

"The whole of the Apocalypse," added Dokeos, "proves the existence of such an intermediate state. The scene of the Revelation, in which good and bad spirits mingled, in which angels and devils acted out their parts, could neither have been heaven nor hell. In one chapter John records that he was invited to see 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife;' he ascended a great and high mountain: he saw '*ascending from God out of heaven* that holy city, New Jerusalem.' The Apostle was therefore not in heaven, out of which he saw the symbolic city descend. Heaven was above; hell was beneath: consequently, he was on the 'earth' of the spiritual world—the intermediate state. The term 'up,' which is usually applied to heaven, is in no strict sense true in the natural world, every point of which momentarily changes its direction; the term is true in the spiritual world, as

also the term 'down,' as applied to the location of hell. The terms express facts as to that world; and because of the harmony existing between the things of intellectual thought and the things of the spiritual world, the terms are felt to be apposite, and it is said 'up' to heaven, and 'down' to hell. John was between heaven and hell, or in the Intermediate State. The seven-sealed book was seen there. The woman clothed with the sun, standing on the moon, and crowned with twelve stars, was beheld there. The struggle between the dragon and Michael was there; the vials of wrath and judgment were poured out there; the witnesses lying in the midst of 'spiritual Sodom and Egypt, where also the Lord was crucified' (Rev. xi. 8), were there; the fall of Babylon and the lamentations over it were there. The scene of judgment, the separation of the corn from the chaff, the wheat from the tares, the wise from the foolish virgins, the man that had not on the wedding-garment from those who were thus arrayed, the unprofitable servant from those who had increased their talents, and the sheep from the goats, was to be in that intermediate state, the World of Spirits. Into that world the representative city, New Jerusalem, was to descend, and thence should its holy influences flow down into the hearts and minds of the members of the Christian Church on the natural earth. There should be seen the River of Life and the Tree of Life, whose fruit should be for food and its leaves for *medicine*; there the Lamb should be the temple, and the gracious invitation should there be heard, to re-echo thence upon the earth, 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.' In rejecting the truth that there is a middle state, your Protestantism has thrown

away one of the many keys supplied by the Lord for unlocking the secrets of His Word."

"I begin indeed to believe it," I exclaimed.

#### THE SPIRITS IN PRISON.

"Now of the spirits in prison," said Dokeos. "Speaking of the apostasy of the Israelites, Isaiah thus declares: 'It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall punish the hosts of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited' (Isa. xxiv. 21, 22). All things in the spiritual world are only the outcoming representative appearances of inward spiritual states. Such therefore are prisons, bonds and darkness. Spiritual imprisonment is there external, because it was first internal. The external appearances in the most minute particulars correspond to the internal states of those whom they surround. Spiritual imprisonment, therefore, is the binding of all the faculties of the mind; it inwardly consists in the deprivation of all the spiritual powers with which men are by birth invested, such as the power of looking upwards towards God and heaven, and of desiring to do so; the power of thus receiving Divine life of interior love and wisdom; the power of thus attaining conjunction with the Lord through the free and voluntary admission of His love, wisdom, and operation. The real danger of false opinions, conclusions, and superstitions is that they imprison and enslave the soul that cherishes them. Their slave is their captive, and may easily become their victim. Who knows not of the fetters of doubt which palsy and paralyze the strength? Mental

indecision is, indeed, spiritual bondage. The deliverance from the power of superstition is in very fact an emancipation of the soul from a spiritual dungeon, where phantasy acted as a gaoler, and companions in the mental and moral darkness were fellow captives, comrades in bonds. If the truth alone can set us free, to be in error and falsity must be spiritual imprisonment. Vice is moral slavery. Such spiritual prisoners are, in the World of Spirits, externally in darkness, more or less profound as they inwardly had more or less fully shut out the light of external truth : those who had utterly perverted the truth are in 'outer' darkness. Their homes are prisons; they endure all the privations of prisoners. In the spiritual world, the inner condition of men inevitably appears, for it dominates and fashions all their surrounding conditions. Because the internal states of the apostate Israelites, referred to by the prophet, had been of such a character, when they passed into the world of spirits such was their corresponding condition: they had in their natural life imprisoned their own souls; and in the spiritual world their lot was the prison-house."

"Were they altogether beyond hope?" I asked.

"Not all of them; for they were to be 'visited,'" replied Dokeos, "and 'visitation' for many would mean release."

"What saith the Word?" said Sophos.

Again I heard the chorus, but this time jubilant and triumphant; the sounds appeared to swell as with thousands and tens of thousands of voices. It was overpowering in exultation, and seemed to me, indeed, as though I had heard the "quiring of young eyed cherubim." Then I saw successively projected upon the pale blue atmosphere, which seemed to thicken and grow opaque behind the lines of glittering, marvellous light, the following passages from the Word:—

THE SPIRIT OF JEHOVAH GOD IS UPON ME; BECAUSE JEHOVAH HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH GOOD TIDINGS UNTO THE MEEK; HE HATH SENT ME TO BIND UP THE BROKEN-HEARTED, TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVE, AND THE OPENING OF THE PRISON TO THEM THAT ARE BOUND.\*

I JEHOVAH HAVE CALLED THEE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND WILL HOLD THINE HAND, AND WILL KEEP THEE, AND GIVE THEE FOR A COVENANT OF THE PEOPLE, FOR A LIGHT OF THE GENTILES; TO OPEN THE BLIND EYES, TO BRING OUT THE PRISONERS FROM THE PRISON, AND THEM THAT SIT IN DARKNESS OUT OF THE PRISON-HOUSE.†

I WILL PRESERVE THEE, AND GIVE THEE FOR A COVENANT OF THE PEOPLE, TO ESTABLISH THE EARTH, TO CAUSE TO INHERIT THE DESOLATE HERITAGES; THAT THOU MAYEST SAY TO THE PRISONERS, GO FORTH; AND TO THEM THAT SIT IN DARKNESS, SHOW YOURSELVES. THEY SHALL FEED IN THE WAYS, AND THEIR PASTURES SHALL BE IN ALL HIGH PLACES. THEY SHALL NOT HUNGER NOR THIRST: NEITHER SHALL THE HEAT NOR SUN SMITE THEM: FOR HE THAT HATH MERCY ON THEM SHALL LEAD THEM, EVEN BY THE SPRINGS OF WATER SHALL HE GUIDE THEM. ‡

AS FOR THEE ALSO, BY THE BLOOD OF THY COVENANT HAVE I SENT FORTH THY PRISONERS OUT OF THE PIT WHEREIN IS NO WATER. TURN YOU TO THE STRONGHOLD, YE PRISONERS OF HOPE.§

FEAR NOT; FOR I AM WITH THEE: I WILL BRING THY SEED FROM THE EAST, AND GATHER THEE FROM THE

\* Isa. lxi. 1.

† Isa. xlii. 6, 7.

‡ Isa. xlix. 8-10.

§ Zech. ix. 11, 12.

WEST; I WILL SAY TO THE NORTH, GIVE UP, AND TO THE SOUTH, KEEP NOT BACK. BRING MY SONS FROM FAR, AND MY DAUGHTERS FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH; EVERY ONE THAT IS CALLED BY MY NAME: FOR I HAVE CREATED HIM FOR MY GLORY; I HAVE FORMED HIM, YEA I HAVE MADE HIM. BRING FORTH THE BLIND PEOPLE THAT HAVE EYES, AND THE DEAF THAT HAVE EARS.\*

OTHER SHEEP I HAVE, WHICH ARE NOT OF THIS FOLD; THEM ALSO MUST I BRING; AND THEY SHALL HEAR MY VOICE; AND THERE SHALL BE ONE FOLD, AND ONE SHEPHERD.†

The impression produced on my mind by this wonderful array of most significant passages of Holy Writ lies beyond description. They seemed to open up before me a vision of Mercy far exceeding anything I had previously conceived of; and also a perception of the mode of Divine operation stretching across two worlds, the natural and the spiritual, and ever working in both. I looked up and saw the grave majestic face of Sophos, the younger and more energetic face of Dokeos, turned towards me, their eyes fixed on mine, in kind and even tender sympathy.

"Well?" asked Sophos.

"I am overwhelmed," I answered; "pray explain."

#### THE LORD'S WORK OF JUDGMENT.

"When the Lord came upon the earth," said Sophos, "there were gathered together in the World of Spirits all the spirits of men who had lived since the days of Noah, and the deluge of evils and falsities by which at that time the human race, excepting the remnant or residue, had been

\* Isa. xliii. 5-8.

† John x. 16.

destroyed. His Divine work of redemption had respect to these spirits in the World of Spirits, as well as to man on earth. Not only did He redeem mankind from the powers of hell, which had terribly enlarged itself, and threatened the extinction of mankind; but in reducing the hells to a state of order, He effected a general judgment upon the spirits of men in the world of spirits, releasing all the prisoners from their prisons, separating the good from the evil, and elevating all the good to heaven, while banishing those who were confirmed in evil to hell. This side of the Divine work of the Redeemer had been predicted by the prophets—His conflicts with the hells—under the symbol of contests with, victories over, and subjugations of His enemies; His gathering the spirits of all men from every quarter of the world of spirits, under the symbol of a gathering of Israel from among all nations; the judgment, under the symbol of the visitation of the spirits, some of whom were ‘prisoners of hope,’ and some of whom were prisoners without hope awaiting only condemnation. ‘The blind people that have eyes’ signify those who had been in ignorance, in whom there was yet the ability of perceiving; and ‘the deaf that have ears’ signify those who had lived in disobedience, yet in whom there was still remaining the capacity of hearing and obeying the Lord, those who had not utterly perverted and profaned the truth. These were ‘the spirits in prison’ unto whom Peter says Jesus ‘preached.’

“Paul also says of the Saviour, ‘Now that He ascended, what is it but that He descended into the lower parts of the earth’ (Eph. iv. 9); concerning which lower, or nether parts of the earth, or ‘the pit,’ much is said in the Word. Thus Isaiah, speaking of Babylon and its people, under the symbol of Lucifer, says, ‘Thou shalt be brought down

to *Sheol*, to the sides of the pit' (Isa. xiv. 15). All who go to the 'lower parts of the earth,' however, are not doomed to destruction, for there they await judgment: therefore the prophet says, 'Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it; *shout ye lower parts of the earth*; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest and every tree therein; for Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel' (Isa. xlv. 23). The Redemption having been followed by a general judgment on the spirits of men, the angels could rejoice in the increase of their numbers, and thus the *heavens* could sing; those of the *lower parts of the earth*, of *Sheol* or *hades*, who were good spirits looking for judgment, could shout for joy at their deliverance; the dwellers in the *mountains*, those in more elevated states, could 'break forth into singing;' they could be joined by all those in whom there were perceptions of the Divine Will—the *forests* and *every tree*; all these could swell the praise of the Lord who had 'redeemed Jacob,' that is, all naturally-minded men who could also become spiritual,—and had 'glorified Himself in Israel,' that is, in all who had become truly regenerate and spiritual."

"Do not cease, O Sophos," I exclaimed. "You bring strange, but truly glorious things to my ears."

"So likewise another prophet declares concerning Pharaoh and the multitude of Egypt: 'They are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.' There is, therefore, no room left for doubt as to what is meant by these three phrases, 'death,' 'the nether parts of the earth,' and 'the pit;' they signify *Sheol* or *hades*. We can also see the origin of the ideas, long entertained, that *hades* was in the natural earth, instead of being, where it is, in the earth of the spiritual world;



and that hell, the bottomless pit, was also in the natural world, in some internal fire, presumed to be burning in the centre of the earth for ever. They who so imagined were wrong; for the spiritual and natural worlds are as discretely distinct from each other as are the spirit and body of a man. Though the Egyptians were thus brought down to the nether parts of the earth and to the pit, the prophet further declares, 'I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to Sheol with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden [all those in whom there are heavenly perceptions], the choice and best of Lebanon [all in whom there is a perception of love of the Lord], all that drink water [all capable of there receiving the truth, because not utterly immersed in evils], *shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth*' (Ezek. xxxi. 14, 16).

"Such are the 'other sheep' whom the Lord was to bring, and who were to *hear His voice*, that He might be the One Divine Shepherd of all His sheep, whether they came from the east or the west, from the north or the south of the spiritual world, to sit down in the kingdom of God (Luke xiii. 29). The 'other sheep' were not in the natural world, for the ministrations of the Saviour while in the flesh were not extended beyond Judæa and Samaria; yet these 'other sheep' *heard His voice*, and He brought them! Then also was fulfilled another of His Divine statements: 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. . . . Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation' (John v. 25, 28, 29)."

"Stay," I said. "Do not these words refer to the

resurrection of the natural body and the general judgment at the last day?"

"There is no resurrection of the natural body," replied Sophos. "The notion of such a resurrection is unreasonable, contrary to Divine revelation, and untrue. When a man passes into the spiritual world he abides there for ever."

"No resurrection of the natural body!" I exclaimed, astounded at the statement. "But we read, 'If the dead rise not, then is Christ not raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain.' What must we understand by this?"

"Dokeos will converse with you on that point presently," rejoined Sophos. "Dismiss it, therefore, for a little while from your thoughts. You appear to imagine that the general judgment will take place in the natural world upon the risen natural bodies of men, who must, therefore, be gathered together on the earth, at some 'last day.' This is a mistaken view. The scene of all judgment is the World of Spirits; there alone could the spirits of all flesh be gathered together. Such a judgment is described in the Apocalypse as taking place in that world. That such a judgment has been already passed upon some must appear evident from the fact, that some have gone to heaven and some to hell; for unless they had been judged, how could they have received the recompence of their labours in heaven, or the reward of their doings in hell? Are these souls to be brought from their eternal homes to be judged a second time at some supposed 'last day'? For what end would be this second judgment? How could either heaven or hell be their final dwelling-place, their eternal home, if they needed thus to return to earth, or elsewhere, to be re-judged?"

"The phrase 'the last day' has no relation to the earth,

which is to endure for ever, that it may continue to be a birthplace of human intelligences, and thus a seminary of heaven. No portion of the Divine Word has been more misunderstood and misinterpreted than those which seem in the letter to refer to the 'consummation of the age,' and the 'judgment to come.' Statements which are true only when understood to refer to either the spiritual states of the Church and of mankind, or to scenes which are to occur in the World of Spirits, have been regarded as predictions to be literally accomplished on the natural earth. Confusion of thought has resulted, and, in too many cases, an eclipse of faith. God, the Eternal Creator, will not become the destroyer. 'One generation goeth, and another cometh, but the earth abideth for ever.' The phrase 'last day' is rightly applied to man individually, and also to the times of the end of a dispensation or church. Applied to men, the phrase 'last day' means the time of their end, of their transit from the natural into the spiritual world, their last day on earth, which will be absolutely their last; for when once they have left the world they will never return to it. Applied to a church, or dispensation of Divine mercy and revelation, it signifies its consummation, the close of that dispensation. In the latter sense it is applied in the Word to the termination of the Jewish dispensation, and also to the first state of the Christian Church, which is to be succeeded by a new state, more abounding in love and light. It must be known to you, that the phrase 'end of the world,' used in the New Testament, really signifies the 'end of the *age*,' and not of the 'world;' the 'fulness of time' means the preparedness of the time for the advent of our Lord."

"True," I observed, "and hence Paul speaks of his time as 'the last days,' the time of the end, the fulness of

times. I will remember, and will afterwards examine into these things," I added. "But you were speaking of the dead who should hear the voice of the Saviour."

"I said that the Divine statement was fulfilled in the World of Spirits, where those who had been dead were to hear His voice, and that all who heard should live. The statement refers to the spirits in prison, who are said to lie as 'in graves,' because they had not yet arisen to judgment. There were both good and evil among them: the resurrection of life was the raising of the good to heaven; the resurrection of damnation was the final dismissal of the evil to hell. Natural bodies can exist in the natural world alone: those who ascend to heaven or descend to hell must be spiritual beings, and such can alone be found in the spiritual world. Consequently, those of whom the Lord spoke were spiritual beings in the spiritual world, who were awaiting the judgment, and whom the Lord, before He ascended, was to judge. They were to 'hear His voice,' and those who had done good were to rise to life: while those who had done evil were to rise to damnation. Thus understood, the Saviour's words were a prophecy, of which Peter declares the fulfilment, in his statement that the Lord preached to the spirits in prison."

"This seems so strange, so startlingly new to me, Sophos," I returned, "that I need time to even understand it; and much more before I could see whether it is true or false. I must examine into the matter."

"Do so," said Sophos. "No man can intelligently believe that of the truth of which he is not rationally convinced. The wisdom of angels consists solely in this, that they see and comprehend what they think. They utterly reject the notion that the understanding ought to be kept in subjection to a so-called 'faith.' They would

ask, 'How can you believe a thing, when you do not see whether it is true or not?' Should any one affirm that what he advances must nevertheless be believed, they would reply, 'Do you think yourself a god that I am to believe you? Or that I am mad, that I should believe an assertion in which I do not see any truth? If I must believe it, cause me to see the truth of what you affirm.' They are in the spiritual affection of truth, and therefore they enjoy an internal perception and acknowledgment of truth."

"When was it that the Saviour effected this great work in the World of Spirits? Was it during the few hours that His body was in the sepulchre?" I asked.

"Between the Lord's resurrection and His ascension 'far above all heavens' there elapsed forty days, during which He was visible to the spiritual world in His Glorified Humanity. His Divine work was not previously completed, or He would at once have ascended. The subjects of His Divine operation, during these forty days, were the inhabitants of the World of Spirits, whom He judged, and those also of the heavens, which He established and arranged in order. When His Divine work was at length fully accomplished, He ascended to where He 'was before,' above 'all the heavens,' that in His Glorified Humanity He might thenceforward 'fill all things.' The first consequence to men on earth of this glorification and ascension of the Lord's Humanity was the outpouring of His Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Other consequences have followed, and are following from it: the establishment of His Church, the enlightenment of mankind, and all the spiritual influences that have since been working in the world for the purification of society, the enfranchisement of thought, political liberty, human progress, and the spiritual regeneration of man. The advance has been slow, truly; yet what a prodigious problem it is to solve,

—that of leading men in perfect freedom to the voluntary love and practice of righteousness, the only permissible instrument being the proclamation of the truth, as far and as fast as the states of men will bear it ! The patience which needs to forbear with the millions of men through long thousands of years, while they seem to be working out, as of themselves and by themselves, the solution of the problem, is indeed an infinite patience ! But the problem and the patience are alike Divine.”

Sophos ceased. I had no answer to make. The speculation was too lofty for me to pursue further : it was to furnish matter for subsequent consideration, and not for immediate judgment. I could only listen, and suffer these teachers to lead my thoughts whither they would. Whatever objections I might, at another time and under other circumstances, have remembered, or conceived, came not now to my mind. It seemed theirs to speak ; mine to hear. I think now of the mental state, which then appeared to have been induced upon me : it was that of sustained amazement at the mass of new ideas, flowing continually from these men ; impinging often on all my preconceived notions ; sometimes carrying, far beyond their old terminations, lines of thought along which I had previously to some slight extent travelled, and always opening up new vistas, down which I could gaze, and where I seemed to see most strange and yet not unreasonable things.

After the pause, during which they again appeared to recede from me, and to become more ærial, as though, were it long continued, they might melt away from before me altogether, and vanish like beings of another sphere, I raised my eyes. They immediately approached me once more.

“I will meditate at another time on all you have told me,” I said. “It is clear to me that my present duty is to listen. Speak on.”

## THE SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF NUMBERS.

"One word, before we quit this topic," said Dokeos. "Does it not seem to you that there must be an internal signification in the more than coincidence that the fast and temptation of the Lord in the wilderness continued for 'forty days,' and that the period between the resurrection and ascension of our Lord was again 'forty days'?"

"There is then a spiritual significance in the numbers employed in the Word?" I asked.

"There is," replied Dokeos, "and many of the numbers which have so often bewildered and defeated commentators have been used in the Word solely for the sake of their spiritual signification."

"Is, then, this significance invariable?" I asked.

"It is invariable," replied Dokeos. "Literal history in the Word, indeed, has often been made to bend to the superior exigency of conveying the right spiritual signification."

"This at least explains why round numbers are so often employed in Scripture," I observed.

"And also shows how the errors of copyists of the Word should the less affect its real meaning; the signification of 10, 100, 1000, or 10,000, of 2 or 20, of 3 or 30, of 4 or 40, of 7 or 70, of 12 or 144, or 144,000, being nearly the same, the last component of the mixed number only intensifying the signification of the primary."

"And you would have me infer from the repetition of the forty days—what?" I inquired.

"A full state of preparation: in the Lord's fast, a full state of preparation for His Divine work in the world; in the period between His resurrection and ascension, a full state of preparation for His ascending above the heavens."

"And the forty days of descending rain at the time of the Deluge?" I asked.

"A full state of vastation, or preparation for spiritual destruction," answered Dokeos.

"And the forty days fulfilled for embalming Jacob ; and the forty days' fast of Moses on Mount Sinai ; and the forty days after which the spies returned to Moses ; and the forty days that Elijah went in the strength of the meat which the Lord had provided ; and the forty days during which Ezekiel was to bear the iniquity of Judah ; and the forty days ere yet Nineveh was to be destroyed, according to the message of Jonah—what do these signify?" I demanded.

"All of these signify a full state of preparation for the purpose named," answered Dokeos. "The same is signified in every mention that is made of forty, whether of men, or things, or years ; as in the Divine promise that for the sake of forty righteous men in Sodom the city should be spared ; the forty sockets of silver used in the boards of the tabernacle ; the temple of Solomon, and also that seen by Ezekiel in vision, being forty cubits long ; Isaac being forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife ; Esau being forty years old when he took Judith ; the Israelites being forty years in the wilderness ; Moses being forty years old when he visited his brethren ; Joshua being forty years old when Moses sent him to spy out the land ; the Israelites in Canaan having peace under Othniel the Judge for forty years ; the Israelites, before the birth of Samson, being delivered into the hands of the Philistines for forty years ; Eli having judged Israel forty years ; the reigns of David and Solomon being each forty years ; the land being desolate and uninhabited for forty years, as predicted by Ezekiel ; and in all other cases. Each of these circumstances denote spiritual truths, and



the number is significative. Each circumstance was likewise a predictive type, referring, in its highest and inmost sense, to the Lord and to His Divine work."

#### THE WORD IN HEAVEN.—THE COMING OF THE LORD.

"Remember this," said Sophos: "when the angels read the Word, all the names of men, of countries, and of natural events and objects signify to them spiritual, yea, Divine principles, having reference to goodness and truth in relation to man, and to Love and Wisdom in relation to the Lord. In like manner, all numbers denote to them spiritual qualities; times express states, and duration denotes continuance of such states as are indicated by the times which are mentioned; spaces and points of space, or places, convey to them the idea of spiritual conditions, from or to which rational and free intelligences, such as themselves, or men, may mentally journey, or through which they may pass. Hence all the journeys spoken of in the Word indicate to them advances or retrogressions in state. So all battles express to them the conflict of principles, severally represented by the combatants. Births denote to them the introduction of a new affection or a new truth into the soul; and all the incidents of life are read by them as signifying changes of state. If men would read and think like the angels, they must learn to perceive in the literal, local, personal, and temporal statements of the Divine Word the spiritual, all-inclusive, universal, and ever-abiding significance of truth."

"Have the angels then the Word of God?" I asked.

"'For ever, O Lord,' saith the Psalmist, 'Thy Word is established in heaven' (Psa. cxix. 89)," answered Dokeos. "Besides, the Apostle declares of the revelations given

through the prophets concerning 'the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow,'—'Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; *which things the angels desire to look into*' (1 Pet. i. 12). The Word, therefore, has an angelic, a spiritual side, which fits it for the study of angels. It has also a Divine side, making it the revelation of the Divine and Eternal *Logos*, the Written Word or Wisdom of God, testifying to the 'Word made flesh.' Angels understood the purpose for which the Lord would come; they knew of the Scriptures which He came to fulfil; a multitude of the heavenly hosts sang their new song in the hearing of the shepherds of Bethlehem; they are so closely associated with men as to discern when they repent, or when they reject the truth; they desire to look into and to understand the deeper mysteries of the Divine work of redemption and Providence; they must, therefore, possess the Divine and Eternal oracles of the Most High."

"If this be true, it would indeed elevate the revealed Word far above any estimate I had previously formed of it," I said. "If such spiritual truths as Sophos has referred to are everywhere contained in the Scriptures, the Word is rendered thereby an ever-living, ever-pertinent, and universally applicable teacher of Divine and spiritual things."

"And such it is," replied Sophos. "The Word is like a man clothed: the larger portion of his body is rendered invisible by his garments, which, however, adjust themselves to the form of his person, yet his hands and face are visible; so the interior wisdom of the Word is generally clothed in the literal history, precept and

parable, yet everywhere adapted to contain it; still in places the inner wisdom, the abiding spiritual Word, is discernible, uncovered and laid bare. Sometimes, too, 'the Word' is transfigured before us, and its raiment shines as the light. The Lord has covered the inner glory, the spiritual wisdom of His Word, as with a cloud: at times, however, the cloud is very thin, the inner glory bursts through, so that all can perceive its true meaning, can discover its beauty and brightness, and its universal applications, and can plainly see that it is the ever-enduring wisdom of God."

I sighed. "If this could be established, how speedily the gaunt spectre of unbelief would disappear from among mankind!"

"Not so," replied Dokeos. "When the Divine Word was made flesh, and dwelt in visible form among men, they scoffed at His claims, and denounced Him, who was God manifest, as a blasphemer against God! They dressed Him in purple, to mock Him. They gave Him a reed for sceptre, and thorns for crown; and, finally, they crucified Him. Were He to come into the world a second time in person, men would repeat the crime. How would the lowly Man of Nazareth be welcomed in the cathedrals and churches consecrated to His worship? Would they suffer Him to preach on their steps? How would He be treated were He again to drive out, with a scourge of cords, every money-changer,—every one who traffics in spiritual things for gain,—from temples dedicated to His name? Would the rulers believe? Would modern Pharisees submit to His ordinances? modern Sadducees accept His teachings? or modern Herodians acknowledge His authority? No. If He came, and was not accompanied with the pomp of an external sovereignty, or with the might of attesting miracle, or with flaming terrors,

and an unbearable glory, most of the people who profess to be His disciples would reject Him, deride Him as an impostor, or imprison Him as seditious. The streets of Rome, or of Paris, or of London, would furnish no fitting place for His sermons. The many would marvel, some would scoff, hundreds would persecute, and only a few would believe. Dared He to denounce the luxury and sins of the time, ten thousand voices would cry 'Fanatic!' and thousands, 'Charlatan!' Did He venture to correct the errors of centuries, or to propound broader principles of truth than the world has consented to regard as 'His *religion*,' a hundred Doctors, if they deigned to notice Him at all, would rush to debate with Him, while thousands of believers would declare them victorious!"

"I fear there is too much truth in this," I replied. "Yet we look for His coming, and expect it with hope."

"Dokeos is right," said Sophos. "He will come, not in person, but in spirit, to those who are in the natural world, and who long for His advent, and who desire to receive Him. His coming shall be 'in the clouds of heaven,' in the revelation of the internal or spiritual signification of His Holy Word, to those whose internal states fit them to understand and to value it aright. His first coming was as 'the Word made flesh,' the Divine Wisdom become incarnate; His second coming will be as the Word glorified, the Divinity of the Word being revealed by the open manifestation of its indwelling Wisdom and sanctity."

"Yes," added Dokeos, "and His coming will bring clearer perceptions of Divine truth to all longing and expectant eyes; deeper aspirations for holiness, and loftier spiritual attainments to all those whose one great purpose of life is to know and love their God; enlarged powers of use to those who have learned the

grandeur of humility and the dignity of ministration; whose life-ambition it is to render true service for mankind!

"The results of His coming will be greater intellectual liberty, a wondrous development of science, a greater knowledge of and control over the forces of nature, a broader charity, a deeper sense of the necessity of goodness, a growing impatience and hatred of war, and largely extended political freedom. All nations will feel the new impulses which He will give to true progress; and old things will rapidly be replaced by new and better things. To His universal Church He will come, with clearer light to those who seek to learn, with deeper experiences to those who desire to love, with greater ability to those who strive to work. He will come in the majesty of His truth to judge the souls of men in the World of Spirits; with the bounties of His grace to them, who, like the wise virgins, have brought their lamps, and oil in their vessels with their lamps; with the terrors of His glory to those who, because they love darkness and hate the light, will cry to the rocks and hills to cover them, to hide them from—amazing contrast!—"the wrath of the Lamb!"

"Would that He were already come!" I exclaimed. "But to go back to our previous topic. Thus far, I see clearly, there is, there must be, an intermediate state; and it also seems evident that men are to be judged, not in this world, but in that 'World of Spirits,' before they go either to heaven or hell. Yet, while I cannot see, if this view is correct, that there is any necessity for the resurrection of the natural body, either as being essential to immortality, or to consciousness, or to rewards or punishments, the denial of this doctrine, which the Church has so consistently taught, does appear startling."

"Dokeos," said Sophos with great dignity, "answer our friend."



## CHAPTER V.

### WILL THE NATURAL BODY RISE?

**W**E do not deny the resurrection, nor the resurrection of the body," said Dokeos. "There are, however, two points on which it is probable we may differ. The first is as to the nature of the resurrection body; and the second is as to the time at which the resurrection of man really takes place. We affirm that the resurrection body is the spiritual body, or the body of a man's spirit, which is fitted to dwell in the spiritual world, where alone it can dwell; and that the time of the resurrection is immediately after the death of his natural body. Your remark seems, on the contrary, to intimate your opinion that the resurrection body is to be the old natural body, which the spirit had previously abandoned, which is to be raised from the grave, changed, in some mysterious manner, as to its character and qualities, and into which the spirit is to return, so as thenceforward to inhabit that still material though spiritualized natural body for ever; and further, that this resurrection is to take place at some period, still in the future, when, at what is termed 'the last day,' all the decayed natural bodies of men are thus to rise. Do I state the position fairly?"

"Yes," I answered, with some hesitation.

"You do well to hesitate," rejoined Dokeos; "for your meaning actually amounts to this :—that the *spiritual* body will not rise at all. For, as you admit, the *spiritual* body is not in the grave, and as only that which is in the grave can rise from the grave, the *spiritual* body cannot rise from the grave. You say, further, that it is the old material body which is in the grave, and which will rise from the grave; but that in consequence of the new character and quality of life which will descend into and animate this body, it will thenceforth be termed *spiritual*. Hence it is only by anticipation that it is called the *spiritual* body. For it must be evident, that until the various members of this body which, you say, is to rise, are gathered together, and thus, the body is re-formed, the spirit, which is to make it a *spiritual* body, cannot enter into and revivify it. While it is thus being re-formed, it is neither *natural* nor *spiritual*, but *material* alone; for until it is vivified by the spirit, it cannot be *spiritual*; and it is also evident that, unless this process of re-forming is purely subterranean, the re-uniting members must rise before they are vivified; hence, after all, it is not the *spiritual* body which is to rise, but a *material* body, which, after rising, is to become a *spiritual* body. To this conclusion we are driven by your premises."

"I cannot reply to you," I said.

"Let us now inquire," continued Dokeos, "what you mean by this antithesis, *natural* and *spiritual*, as applied to the body. In what does the difference consist? Is it a *moral* difference, affecting the moral character of those who inhabit those spiritual bodies?"

"It may be," I replied. "Let us say that it is, and that the *spiritual* body means the higher moral quality of those who possess such *spiritual* bodies."

"How, then, as to those who rise, and who are afterwards damned? Will they not possess *spiritual* bodies? Will the change effected in their bodies, from natural to spiritual, be the implantation therein of this higher moral character of life?"

"It is manifest," I responded, "that this definition will not hold good."

"Then, the difference not being of a moral character, as to the quality of the animating life, what is it?"

"Tell me," I answered humbly.

"It must therefore be as to the character and quality of the body itself," rejoined Dokeos. "Now, what are the essential constituents of the *natural* body?"

"Flesh, and blood, and bones," I replied.

"Can you conceive of a material body having no flesh? or containing no blood?"

"Certainly not; if the bones remained, it would be only a skeleton, an image of Death."

"Truly. But do you not remember a statement of the Apostle as to flesh and blood not inheriting the kingdom of God?"

"Yes. 'Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption,'" I answered.

"The resurrection body, then, will not consist of flesh, nor will it consist of blood, nor, by parity of reasoning, will it consist of bones: how, then, can it be the old material body which died and was buried?"

"I cannot see how," I returned.

"But the Apostle affirms that the resurrection body is in no sense the same body as was sown. Do you not remember the statement?"

"Yes," I responded. "He says, 'But some will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do



they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou *sowest not that body that shall be,*" I quoted.

"How, then, can you affirm that the body which is to be raised will, in any sense, be the same as the body that was sown?"

"No, Dokeos," I answered, "we cannot so affirm with truth."

"Let us try another line of inquiry. Where will be the eternal home for the good?"

"In heaven of course."

"And of the wicked."

"Certainly in hell."

"Are heaven and hell in the natural, the material world, or in an altogether different plane?"

"They are certainly not in the natural world; they must therefore be in such an altogether different plane," I replied.

"Can you, then, conceive of a material body dwelling entirely in heaven or in hell, of which you are bound to assert, if you assert anything, that they are not material places in a material world?"

"No, I cannot conceive of it," I answered; "for so to conceive would involve a contradiction."

"Must you not conclude, then, that a natural, or material, world is the only plane in which material bodies can dwell; and that spiritual bodies can dwell only in a spiritual plane or world?"

"It truly seems so," I replied.

"And must you not also conclude that if the resurrection body is a material body, and if the material body can dwell only in a material world, and if heaven and hell are not in any material world, then, in that case, the resurrection body cannot dwell eternally in either heaven or hell?"

"It certainly follows from the premises," I replied.

"Then, does it not amount to a demonstration that, if heaven and hell are not in a material world, and the resurrection body is to dwell eternally in heaven or in hell, the resurrection body cannot possibly be a material body? And still further: if, then, the resurrection body is not to be a material body, inasmuch as only the material body was buried in the earth, no such material body is to rise from the grave?"

"I cannot gainsay the argument despite the conclusion," I observed.

"Now," said Dokeos, "we will approach the question from another point of view. You believe that the rich man of the Lord's parable did actually lift up his eyes in hell?"

"Certainly."

"That, therefore, he had eyes, and an obviously fair inference is that he had also a face, a tongue, hands, feet, and, in short, a body?"

"Undoubtedly," I answered; "he must have possessed all these, and so must Lazarus, else they could not have recognised each other. Were not the spirit in the human form, recognition of friends in the spiritual world would be impossible."

"True. You believe also that the thousands and tens of thousands who had been redeemed out of every nation, who were seen by John, as described in the Apocalypse, were actually seen by him?"

"Yes, certainly."

"You believe that Moses and Elias were actually seen by Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration?"

"Beyond all question," I replied. "It is distinctly so stated."

"Then, if these were actually seen, they must have possessed bodies of some kind?"

"They must, certainly."

"What kind of bodies did they possess? Material or natural bodies?"

"No; for they were living in the spiritual world; and the material bodies which they previously possessed were mouldering in the dust; or some of them, doubtless, had been burned, inasmuch as *cremation*, or burning the dead, was then the practice."

"They did not possess material bodies, that is certain," continued Dokeos. "What other kinds of bodies do we read about, or can we conceive of?"

"There are only two kinds of bodies spoken of in the Scriptures, the natural and the spiritual, the *psychical* and the *pneumatical* bodies," I answered.

"These, then, had not *natural* bodies; but there are only two kinds of bodies, natural and spiritual; therefore, what kind of bodies had these men?"

"There is no escape," I said. "*Spiritual* bodies, evidently."

"But what is that process by reason of which men are said in the Word to become *spiritual* bodies?"

"The resurrection," I answered.

"Observe the conclusion: So far as these men were concerned then, they had obtained their spiritual bodies; but obtaining such spiritual bodies is the result of the resurrection; consequently their resurrection had already been accomplished! Must we not so conclude?"

"Indeed, it would appear so," I replied.

"If these then had been already raised from the dead," continued Dokeos, "how can they need to look forward to some future Resurrection-day that they might obtain what they already possessed, viz. their *spiritual* or resurrection-

bodies? Their resurrection had already been realized. This resurrection had been of the spiritual body; and which, further, had been raised into, and was existing in, the spiritual world."

"You land me in a maze, Dokeos," I replied. "In order that I may feel my way to clearness and certainty, will you permit me to ask some questions?"

"Certainly," rejoined Dokeos.

"Is your view of the resurrection, that it is of the spiritual body into the spiritual world, and that it takes place immediately after death, really the teaching of the Word on this subject?"

"It is," said Dokeos, solemnly.

"Is it, Sophos?" I asked.

"It is," replied Sophos, "and the angels are amazed that any other idea should prevail."

#### THE SAVIOUR AND THE SADDUCEES.

"Listen!" added Dokeos. "The Sadducees believed there was no resurrection, that is, that there was no life after death; for the two phrases were synonymous. Hence it is said in Acts xxiii. 8 'that the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit.' Some of these once came to the Saviour, sarcastically proposing the case of a certain woman who had been successively married to seven brothers, and demanding whose wife she should be in the *resurrection*. The Lord answered, 'They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that world* and *the resurrection of the dead* neither marry, nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more; for they are *equal unto the angels* . . . Now that the dead *are raised*, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called God the God of Abraham, the God of

Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not the God of the dead but of the living; for all live unto Him' (Luke xx. 34-38). Observe the manifest meaning of this Divine statement: to 'obtain the resurrection of the dead' is to obtain '*that world*,' not the natural but the spiritual world! Again: there is nothing said as to the resurrection of dead *material bodies*, which could exist only in the natural world, but the resurrection of '*the dead*.' Those who are raised are further said to be 'equal unto the angels,' or, as Mark records the words, '*as the angels* which are in heaven': they are with the angels in heaven, not restored, by resurrection, to the earth; they are 'as,' or 'equal with,' the angels! Who dreams of the angels ever having re-assumed once natural, but resuscitated material bodies? Yet the angels have spiritual bodies! But further still, the Saviour's reply affirms that the dead were *then* being raised; that they had been raised in all former times; that Moses had a perception of this truth, and had indeed declared it in describing God as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

"Many commentators," I remarked, "have allowed that this passage teaches the continued existence of the soul after death, and not the resurrection."

"Yet, does it not seem strange if there were any other doctrine of the resurrection, that the Lord should not have taught it on this occasion? The question was most pointed; both the question and the answer have been recorded for the instruction of all men everywhere. Can you safely accuse the Lord of suppressing the truth?"

"You confound me again," I exclaimed.

"The very word rendered *resurrection* indicates the true idea," continued Dokeos. "It is *anastasis*, which is derived from the root *anistemi*; a compound of *ana*, upwards, or again, and *istemi*, to stand; or, if used

actively, it means *to cause to stand*. The noun form *anastasis* means, therefore, a *standing again*, or a *standing up*. It is used in 'he *arose* (*anastas*) and followed him,' in 'raise *up* (*anastēsei*) seed to his brother,' in 'till another king *arose* (*anestē*),' in 'if Satan *rise up* (*anestē*) against himself,' and in many other similar cases. None of these uses of the word imply a *rising again*. Dead things lie prone and prostrate: living things *stand up*: to say that men shall realize an *anastasis* is not to say that their material bodies shall *rise again*; but that they, the men themselves, shall *rise up*, or *stand up*, or continue to exist after death. Only in one case (Matt. xxvii. 53) is another word used for resurrection, *egirō*, *to raise*, with its derivative *egersis*, raising, and this latter is applied to the resurrection of the Saviour alone, whose resurrection, as I shall show you, differed from that of all others, and which is therefore described by a different word."

"I shall note that point, Dokeos," I remarked.

"Do so, for we shall soon need to return to it," replied he. "Because, then, *anastasis* meant the future existence, or *standing up* of those who die, the Sadducees employed this word, and the Lord's answer was complete. It confounded them out of the 'Law,' which they acknowledged; and it also satisfied the Pharisees who witnessed the confusion of their dialectical opponents. But from the Saviour's answer, it is evident that His Divine definition of the *anastasis*, or resurrection, is the future state of existence, and certainly not a resurrection of material bodies.

"Further, it is remarkable that, as given by Luke, the Lord's statement is even more pointed than in the parallel passage in the other Gospels. Matthew records it, 'But concerning the resurrection *of the dead*,' but Luke records it, 'the resurrection *that is FROM* the dead' (*tes*

*ek nēkron*), or *from out of the dead*; meaning really a resurrection of the spiritual body *from out of the dead body*. The same emphatic form is used in Acts iv. 2, 'They taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection *that is from out of the dead*;' so in Phil. iii. 11, the Apostle desires, 'If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection *from out of the dead*.' To this latter passage and its context we shall also need to return. Our present conclusion, as to the Lord's words to the Sadducees, must be that He certainly did not teach the notion of a resurrection of dead material bodies."

"I must admit so much, Dokeos," I rejoined. "But Paul, does he not teach the doctrine?"

#### PAUL AND THE RESURRECTION.

"It would be somewhat dangerous to Paul to say that he taught a doctrine which the Saviour, by reasonable implication, denied," replied Dokeos. "But this is not necessary, as Paul certainly never taught the notion which so many fancy they find in his Epistles. For example, Paul taught, 'For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. . . . Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight: we are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord' (2 Cor. v. 1-8). The Apostle here draws a contrast between the two bodies. The 'earthly house of this tabernacle' evidently means the earthly, the

*natural*, or, as he elsewhere terms it, the *psychical* body, of which he wrote in his first Epistle: of this he says that while present therein, he was 'absent from the Lord;' and he gives a reason for this, 'we walk by faith, not by sight.' The 'building of God,' the 'house not made with hands,' evidently means the risen, or, what he terms the *pneumatical* or *spiritual*, body: of this he says that it shall be 'eternal in the heavens,' not such a material body as would necessitate its possessor to return to and dwell on a material earth; and, further, that to be in that *spiritual* body would be to be 'present with the Lord,' and walk no longer by faith, but by sight. The contrast is thus complete. But observe: Paul uses the present tense in respect of that 'building of God,' not the future: 'we have,' not '*we shall have*.' Certainly, the Apostle does not here imply any forsaking of the building of God which was to be eternal in the heavens; or any returning after many ages to the earth, and dwelling there in a resuscitated material body. The expectation of possessing this *spiritual* body, this building of God, was to be realized immediately after death. Hence, he says again, 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is much better' (Phil. i. 21-23). The *anastasis* or resurrection that Paul desired was, therefore, the same as that of which the Saviour spoke to the Sadducees, occurring immediately after the death of the natural body. It is the same *anastasis* as that to which the Preacher in Ecclesiastes referred,—'Then shall the dust return to the earth, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it' (Eccl. xii. 7). This, the resurrection of man in his *spiritual body* into the *spiritual world*, is the only resurrection which the Word predicates for man."



## THE LORD'S RESURRECTION.

"But, Dokeos," I exclaimed, "let us come to the main point at once: Did not the Lord's body rise? Is not His resurrection a pattern, and also a pledge, of the resurrection of man?"

"Now we touch the kernel of the dispute," rejoined Dokeos. "It is true that the Lord rose with His whole body complete. He said, 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have:' thus affirming a distinction between Himself and all spirits, not even excepting 'the spirits of just men made perfect.' This point is fully admitted; the point which needs to be proved is that the resurrection-body of the Saviour is the pattern and example of the resurrection-bodies of all men. This I deny. Jesus was in all respects one by Himself. Observe how far this isolation really extends: He had no human father; from birth He was 'that holy thing' to be born of the Virgin, 'the Son of God;' His body could walk on the water; it could even make itself invisible; and it could also be transfigured before the disciples. It is said of Him alone, 'Thou wilt not leave His soul in *hades*, nor suffer Thy holy one to see *corruption*.' In these respects, Jesus differed from all men; and differing so far from men in the character of His birth, and in the nature of His body, is it surprising that He should differ in the nature of His resurrection-body? He alone ascended far above all the heavens; but as the manner of His ascension was different from that of any man, so also His resurrection-body differed from that of any man. We have already noted that His resurrection is expressed by a different word, *egesis* (Matt. xxvii. 53), while *anastasis* is applied to the resurrection of all others."

"But John says," I urged, "'Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He appeareth, we shall be *like Him*; for we shall see Him as He is' (1 John iii. 2)."

"There is, undoubtedly, a parallelism between the Saviour and all who love and obey Him," replied Dokeos. "How far does this parallelism extend? Will the disciples be like their Lord as to *substance*? That cannot be; for He is divine, and they are human. Like Him in *glory*? That cannot be; for He hath ascended above all heavens, that He might fill all things, and 'they will go to their own place.' Like Him in *form*? Yes, for He is the Divine Man, after whose image and in whose likeness they were fashioned. Yet, who would say, that because man was originally formed in the image and likeness of God, man's body was, therefore, of the same substance and character as the Divine Person? But if the non-identity of substance did not prevent man from being in the image and likeness of God, does it not follow that men may be '*like Jesus*,' and yet the substance and character of their resurrection-bodies be altogether different from the substance and character of His? They shall be like their Lord, not in the nature and substance of their resurrection-bodies—this of itself would not be a spiritual boon—but they shall be like Him in *moral character*. Hence, the Apostle continues, 'Every man that hath this hope in him *purifieth himself even as He* (Jesus) *is pure*!' (1 John iii. 3). This means, that he who has this hope prepares himself to be morally like his Lord hereafter, by endeavouring, while in the natural world, to become morally like Him. The resemblance, therefore, is a *moral*, a *spiritual* resemblance, and not one as to the substance and nature of His resurrection-body. It means like Him in holiness, in

obedience, in purity. But such a moral likeness must be in the soul and not in the body. Hence the force of, 'For we shall see Him as He is.' They should 'see Him,' because they would be morally 'like' Him: so He Himself also taught,—'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall *see God*.' That is,—being like God in the purity of their hearts, they should *see God*. If John's words mean that until some yet future resurrection of the dead material body, the believers in Christ would not be 'like Him,' then they declare that until that resurrection, the disciples should not *see Him*; because they would not till then be like Him. Will you assert this? For if your idea of the meaning of John's words be correct, it then follows that *not one of the disciples have yet seen their Lord*, because not one of them has obtained such a resurrection body!"

"It does seem to so follow," I replied; "and of course, I cannot believe such a conclusion."

"Of course not," said Dokeos; "for, again, it would deny all meaning to Paul's desire 'to depart and be with Christ,' or to his statement that 'to be absent from the body would be to be present with the Lord.'"

#### CHRIST THE FIRST-FRUIT.

"You compel me to relinquish that text," I said, after a short pause. "But how am I to understand Paul's reasoning: that Christ is risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruits* of them that slept; that by man came death, and by man came also the resurrection of the dead; that as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; every man in his own order: Christ the *first-fruits*, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming? (1 Cor. xv. 20-23). If He be the first-fruits, does it not

follow that none were raised before Him, and that all who are raised will be like Him?"

"You will observe," said Dokeos, "that the Apostle throughout the whole of this celebrated chapter does not say one word of the resurrection of *unbelievers*; he speaks of the resurrection of those alone *who should be Christ's* at His coming. He contrasts the 'death' which came by man, and 'the resurrection' which came by the Divine Man, and presents them as counterfoils, the one of the other. If, therefore, we can learn what was the nature of the 'death' which came by Adam, or, as we previously explained to you, by the fall of the Most Ancient Church, we may gain some perception of the real nature of the 'resurrection' which came by Christ. The 'being made alive' through Christ is the direct contrast of 'dying in Adam;' and what is meant by the 'resurrection of the dead' is also meant by the 'being made alive.' Do you agree with me to this extent?"

"Manifestly you are so far right," I rejoined, "else Paul's argument would be destitute of point."

"Very well then. We have now to ask—What was the death which came by reason of man's sin? Was it the death of the body?"

"Certainly not," I replied. "This is plain from the very words of Scripture, even when only literally understood. 'In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,' said the Lord. Adam did eat thereof and lived, according to the letter of the Word, more than 900 years afterwards. To say that the *possibility of dying* then first came upon Adam is to wrest the word *die* out of its evident meaning. To say that the 'day' there mentioned means 'a day of the Lord,' which the Psalmist says is 'a thousand years,' and that Adam did literally 'die' within this thousand years, is to wrest the word *day*

out of its evident meaning. In either case, one of the two words, *day* or *die*, must be spiritually understood."

"It is well reasoned," said Dokeos. "The only possible interpretation is attained by understanding both words spiritually—the 'day' meaning *the state of disobedience*; and the 'death' being *spiritual death*, the extinction of all true spiritual life of love and wisdom, of joy and peace; the destruction of the capacity to receive internal life, and also the destruction of the internal life previously received into that capacity."

"Besides," I added, "death was in the world myriads of years before man was created. The command to increase and multiply, and also the bestowal on man of the powers of reproduction, as in the case of all other organic creatures, further implied the death of the earliest reproducers; according to your own recently urged argument, that where space is limited in extent, and matter is limited in quantity, increase could only reach a certain point, when death must ensue; because there would then be no more space in which increase could go on, and no more matter to be utilized by food-consuming man as his means of subsistence. Besides, in obeying the very command to eat of the herbs and fruits of the earth, man was compelled to inflict death on vegetable forms of life. There is, again, no reason for supposing that the animals surrounding the earliest men should have been exempted by a special Providence from dying, and thus from sharing in what had been the common fate of their kind for ages. Death, consequently, was a spectacle which man must have witnessed; the necessity of eating inflicted death that he might live; the command to increase was an implication of death; the existence of medicinal herbs and minerals by which man was surrounded, and the properties of which only man could come to understand

and utilize, was prophetic of disease, which again is prophetic of death. Even the menace of death could not have been comprehended by man had he never witnessed death, and known nothing of its nature. Thus the death of the body must have been a contingency to which man was liable from the beginning, and, therefore, the death of the curse could not have been the death of the body."

"Your argument is irresistible," said Dokeos. "But, again, what was the 'death' from which the Saviour has rescued mankind? Is it the death of the body?"

"I must answer, No," I rejoined. "The Apostles all died. Even John, to whom a mysterious and misunderstood promise was given, had to die. Lazarus, the son of the widow of Nain, Dorcas, and Eutychus, though their bodies had been raised from the dead, have all had to die. It is appointed unto all once to die, and after death the judgment; and these words certainly declare that all must die, and they also imply a judgment in the spiritual world, of which you were speaking just now."

"If then," said Dokeos, "the death of the curse suffered by all men in Adam was not the death of the body, but spiritual death; and if the death from which men are rescued in Christ is not the death of the body, but spiritual death; must we not understand that the resurrection, which is promised to man, in the resurrection which came by Christ, is a spiritual resurrection—the being 'made alive' in our Saviour and God?"

"Indeed, it would seem so," I replied. "Man died spiritually in Adam; man is to be made spiritually alive in Christ. The contrast is equally preserved; it is even more forcible than though we understood it to mean merely that as the body died in or through Adam, so at some far off future day the material bodies of all men

should be revived. Besides, it is in harmony with much else that Paul wrote."

"The conclusion is just," interposed Sophos. "You must be aware that there are two meanings attached in the Word to death—one expressive of the natural idea, the death of the body; the other expressive of the spiritual idea, the death in the soul of all spiritual life, which is the life of love and wisdom, of faith and charity. The human will, when in a state of order, is as a vessel or receptacle of the Lord's Divine love; and the understanding, when in order, is the receptacle of Divine wisdom. When, by reason of disorder, man's will and understanding cease to be such receptacles, the man is said to be spiritually dead. Therefore it is said in the parable, 'This my son was *dead*, and is alive again.' The Apostle also says to the Ephesians, 'You hath He *quickened*, who were *dead* in trespasses and sins;' so likewise he says to the Romans, 'Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be *dead* indeed unto sin, but *alive unto God* through Jesus Christ our Lord;' and again, 'Yield yourselves unto God as those that are *alive unto God*.' He further tells us, 'To be carnally minded is *death*; but to be spiritually minded is *life* and *peace*.' There are thus two kinds of death. The last enemy over whom the Lord is to triumph is death; this must mean spiritual death, and not natural death: for natural death is the gate of life."

"I am aware of this twofold meaning of death," I answered.

"There are, similarly, in the Word two meanings attached to the word 'resurrection,'" continued Sophos; "one is the resurrection which all, both good and bad alike, experience into the spiritual world; and the other is the resurrection of regeneration, which is experienced only by the good, and which such commence to ex-

perience during their life in the natural world. These two ideas of resurrection are so constantly associated in the writings of Paul, as sometimes to render it difficult to separate them. Hence comes the circumstance that in the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians he speaks of the resurrection of believers alone: and herein may be seen the point of his argument as to the contrast between the 'death' which came through Adam, and the 'life' which cometh through the Lord."

"The idea is suggestive," I said, "and I foresee that it will explain a considerable group of Paul's sayings on this subject. But, Dokeos, I await your explanations as to Christ being the *first-fruits*."

"Let us then, in the first place, examine the statement with which Paul opens his argument," said Dokeos. "He says, 'If the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable.' Now, does this mean that if, at some future time, the bodies of the dead should not rise, that would prove that Christ had not risen? If so, it means, that until the resurrection takes place, we have no sufficient proof that Christ was raised! But how could an event which is yet in the future prove that another event, which was in the past, did really take place? Again: how does the possibility of such a future resuscitation prove, what Paul afterwards urges,—that, if Christ be not raised, then they 'which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished'? The idea of a resurrection immediately after death is evidently needed to make any sense of Paul's argument: Christ was raised, therefore men are raised; men are raised, therefore they which are fallen asleep in Christ have not perished. Hence the force of the statement which follows, 'If *in this life only* we have hope, we are



of all men the most miserable' ! Our hope, that is, must be in the *other life*, into which men are raised. Either, then, Paul's argument is no argument at all, or he must have been speaking of a resurrection which was then taking place ; and so he teaches the same doctrine of the *anastasis* as was taught by the Lord."

"This appears forcible, Dokeos," I remarked. "Pray proceed. Paul continues, 'Now is Christ risen and become the first-fruits of them that slept.' How is He the first-fruits, if the after-fruits are not to be like Him?"

"What is meant by them that slept?" asked Dokeos. "Does it mean that Christ was the first of all men to be raised from the dead? It cannot mean this, for the Old Testament speaks of several who were raised from the dead. Does it mean that Christ was the first who ever ascended with His body to heaven? Yet those who would accept this interpretation would also say that Elijah, and perhaps also Enoch, had thus ascended. Does it mean that none were raised from the dead, but that all were 'sleeping' until Christ? This would contradict the Lord's own declaration that 'the dead are raised,' were then being raised, had been raised, indeed, in the days of Moses, and ever since. Is it not plain, then, that 'Christ the first-fruits' cannot mean *first in point of time*?"

"It would indeed appear so," I rejoined ; "or else the Saviour must have meant by 'the dead are raised' something quite different from what Paul meant by the same phrase ; and this would involve the impossible supposition that the teachings of both are inconsistent."

"That is true," continued Dokeos. "The word *Aparchē* used by the Apostle, and which you translate 'first-fruits,' is compounded of *apo* and *archē*, and literally means *from the beginning*. Another form of the

same root is *archegos*, literally, *he who precedes another as leader*, and which is used in the statement that Jesus is the *Author (the beginner)* and finisher of our faith. The Lord Himself employs the same root in 'I am Alpha and Omega, the *beginning (archē)* and the end;' and likewise in 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the *beginning (archē)* of the creation of God.' The term *archē*, in all its forms, signifies precedence; but precedence is of two kinds—precedence in *time*, and precedence in *dignity*. We have seen that Christ could not have been the *Aparchē* of them that slept in the precedence of time: He is therefore the *Aparchē* in the precedence of dignity. This thought is emphasized when we think of the real force of the term 'order'—'every man in *his own order*:' the word is *tagma*, which literally means *rank*, as a body of troops drawn up in military *order*, and which, therefore, implies succession in *dignity* and *excellence*, rather than succession in *time*. As to His resurrection, as with all else, Jesus was the first and the last, the *beginning (archē)* and also the *ending*: He, the *FIRST* in *order, rank, dignity, and excellence*; and after Him, every man in his own rank, or order of dignity and excellence."

"The argument appears to be strong, and requires meditation. I am not now ready to reply to it," I replied.

"There is," continued Dokeos, "another reason why Christ should be called the *Aparchē*. In the time of man's first transgression, the promise was given that the Saviour should come, and that He should bruise the head of the serpent. This Divine purpose runs through all the ages, forms the inmost meaning of the Word, and underlies all the arrangements and dispensations of His Mercy. Prophetically, therefore, He was ever the *Aparchē*, and it was by Him, and through Him, and be-

cause of Him, that all who slept were successively raised, each in his own order. Thus prophetically, He was the *first-fruits* in the precedence of time, as He is absolutely, the *first-fruits* in the precedence of dignity."

"That is, indeed, a helpful thought," I exclaimed. "But why was it necessary that Jesus should rise with His whole body complete, and thus be so unlike all others?"

Sophos answered me. "The Lord rose again not only as to His spirit, but also as to His body, because He glorified His whole Humanity when He was in the world, that is, He made it wholly Divine; for the soul which He had from the Father, and which was the *Father in Him*, was the very Divine itself, and His body was made a likeness of the soul, that is of the Father, and therefore Divine also. Hence He, differently from any man, rose again both as to spirit and as to body. Having thus glorified the lowest principles of the Humanity which He assumed, the Lord has made that Humanity to be the Mediator, or Divine Means, or Medium, by which may flow Divine influences able to reach to the lowest and most naturally minded on earth, as well as to the highest and wisest angel in the heavens. This is wisdom for those who can receive it."

#### "OUR VILE BODY."

"Your answer and explanation shall have my most serious thought, Sophos," I replied. "There is another of Paul's sayings, *Dokeos*, which I wish you would explain. He says that Jesus 'shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body:' does not this refer to the natural body which is to be changed?"

"Surely Paul was not a Gnostic," replied Dokeos. "He did not believe that the *material* body was vile, and in essence sinful. He could not have so characterised the wonderful apparatus by which the spirits of men live in the world. Was it the material body of which he spoke when he said, 'O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from *the body of this death?*' Did he wish some one to murder him? Was it of the material body he spoke, when he told the Colossians that they had been 'circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off *the body of the sins of the flesh;*' or when he enjoined them to 'put off all these,—anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication. . . . Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off *the old man with his deeds;* and have put on the *new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him* that created him'? (Col. ii. 11-13, iii. 8-10). The 'vile body' is evidently the body of vileness, the 'body of this death,' the 'body of the sins of the flesh,' the 'old man with his deeds,' which is to be changed, transformed from the image of the earthly that it may be conformed to the image of the heavenly.

"You will also observe that the Apostle uses the word *body* in the singular, 'our vile body,' not *bodies*. If, however, he meant that the Lord would change our material *bodies*, he surely would have said so. He also uses the singular number in analogous phrases,—'our *old man* is crucified with Him, that the *body of sin* might be destroyed' (Rom. vi. 6); 'If Christ be in you, the *body* is dead because of sin' (viii. 10); and 'the *old man* with his deeds' which the Colossians had put off. But it is evident that to change the *body* of sin is quite another thing from changing the *material bodies* of men; the two things must not be confounded."

"It seems at least a reasonable supposition, Dokeos," I rejoined.

"And it becomes certain if we examine the context," said Dokeos; "the whole chapter (Phil. iii.) teaches not the notion of a future resuscitation of the natural body, but of such a moral and spiritual resurrection as shall render the soul an image and likeness of the Saviour. The Apostle says, therefore, that he counts all things but dross that he may win Christ, and be found in Him; that he may know Him, and 'the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death: *if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.* Not as though *I had already attained, either were already perfect.*'

"The '*power of the Lord's resurrection,*' which Paul longed to know, evidently means the *quickening* power of the Lord, vivifying not dead bodies but human souls aforetime 'dead in trespasses and sins.' The '*fellowship of the Lord's sufferings*' manifestly points to the truth, also affirmed by the same Apostle (Heb. ii. 10; v. 8, 9), that Christ was 'made perfect by sufferings.' He desired to suffer with Christ that he might be glorified together with Christ; but this glorification was to be an inward and spiritual operation, not an external and physical one. So again: his being '*made conformable to His death,*' undoubtedly indicates a favourite doctrine of Paul, viz., that the disciples had been 'buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they also should walk in newness of life. For if they had been planted together in the likeness of His death, they should be also in the likeness of His resurrection' (Rom. vi. 3-13). Paul thus draws out the parallel lines between the historical experiences of Christ and the corresponding

spiritual experiences of the believer, whose 'old man' is crucified with Christ, 'that the body of sin might be destroyed;' for, as he argues, 'he that is dead is freed from sin.' In this spiritual repetition of the experiences of Christ, death means "dying unto sin," resurrection means being 'quickened' by the Lord with spiritual life.

"Only in this way can the appositeness of the next statement of Paul be understood. He desired all the foregoing blessings, in order that he '*by any means* might attain unto the *resurrection from out of the dead*,' for so the Apostle wrote. What does this phrase mean? Merely the future resuscitation of the material body? It cannot mean that, for his body was not dead; and it is further evident from his other statements to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians that he did not expect to *die*, but to be among those who were to be 'changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' What, then, was the resurrection which he longed to attain? Not even the resurrection of the spiritual body into the spiritual world, for this was a universal destiny, and, further, could not be attained so long as man remained alive in the natural world. Surely it will not be said that Paul is here expressing merely a strong desire to die! No: his idea of resurrection was that of a moral and spiritual resurrection. Hence his next remark is also apposite, '*Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.*' To be *perfect*, and to have attained the '*resurrection from out of the dead*,' the full *quickening* with spiritual life of one who had once 'been dead in trespasses and sins,' these were with the Apostle synonymous ideas. This moral resurrection, however, is far other than of the material body: it is a resurrection into spiritual life.

"Hence he further says, 'I follow (*diōkō*, I pursue)

after, that I may apprehend (*katalambanō*, lay hold on) that for which also I am apprehended (laid hold on) of Christ Jesus. *I count not myself to have apprehended* (laid hold on, obtained); but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Surely this prize is far higher than the resurrection of the decayed material body, and which Paul neither expected nor desired!

"The chapter fitly concludes with the statement that Christ 'shall change our *vile body*,' not the physical body of flesh and blood, but the 'body of sin,' the body of vileness, the body of the sins of the flesh, the 'old man with his deeds'—that it may 'be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.'"

"Thank you, Dokeos," I exclaimed; "the argument seems clear and conclusive beyond all cavil."

"To the Romans (vi., viii.), to the Corinthians (1 Ep. xv., 2 Ep. v.), to the Ephesians (ii.), to the Philippians (iii.), and to the Colossians (ii., iii.), he taught the same deep-sighted perception of the practical import of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ; and to mistake the striking parallel for the declaration of a parallel merely between the resurrection-body of the Saviour and that of men, is surely to sacrifice a noble contribution to Christian literature, in the vain attempt to find a notion which the Scriptures not only do not teach, but which they contradict and deny."

"Deny, Dokeos?"

"Yes, most explicitly deny," replied Dokeos. "'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return' (Gen. iii. 19); 'As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he

that goeth down to the grave *shall come up no more*' (Job vii. 9) ; 'Before I go *whence I shall not return*, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death' (Job x. 21) ; 'Thou sowest *not* that body that shall be;' 'Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption;' 'Then shall the dust return to the earth, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.' Are not these sufficiently explicit?"

JOB XIX. 25-27.

"I cannot resist their weight or their directness," I answered. "Yet as you have cited Job, does he not declare, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me'?' (Job xix. 25-27)."

"Surely," replied Dokeos, "you must know that this is what the translators have made him say, and not what Job said. The words *day*, *worms*, and *body* are not in the original at all. The Greek Septuagint gives an altogether different reading of the passage: 'For I know that He is eternal who is about to deliver me, to raise again upon earth this skin of mine which draws up these things. For from the Lord these things have happened to me, of which I alone am conscious, and not another, and which have all been done to me in my bosom.' The Vulgate gives a version which combines the meaning of both the Hebrew and the Greek: 'For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the last day I shall rise from the earth; and again I shall be enveloped with my skin, and in my flesh shall I see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and



my eyes shall behold, and not another: this, my hope is laid up in my bosom.'

"But the word *Goël*, which is translated 'Redeemer,' is far more correctly *vindicator*, or *avenger*, or *deliverer*: it is applied to the 'avenger of blood' who had to avenge on the manslayer the death of a near kinsman; it is also applied to 'the redeemer' of a possession alienated by mortgage, as the kinsman of Naomi is said to have been the *Goël* of the estate which Boaz bought on his marriage to Ruth. The text should read,—'I know that my Vindicator liveth, and shall stand at the last upon the earth; and though after my skin, this (probably the part of the body immediately under the skin) be destroyed, yet in my flesh shall I see God.'

"The question turns on the point, What is meant by 'in my flesh'? The purpose of the whole book is to vindicate the Providence of God, and the only possible meaning of 'in my flesh' is *in this life, before I die*. This meaning is evidently the true one, for it is said (chap. xlii. 5), 'I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but *now mine eye seeth Thee*;' and further, 'God blessed the latter (or last) end of Job more than the beginning;' and the number of his new possessions is recorded. The plan and purpose of the poem was to prove that there is a Divine Providence. Job is asked to give up his trust in God. He declares he will not: he knows that his Vindicator lives, and that he shall see his Vindicator before he dies; and the poem ends by justifying Job's confidence, and vindicating the providence of God. There is, consequently, no reference to the Redeemer, or to the latter day, or to worms destroying his body, or to the resurrection of his flesh. Especially can there not be the latter, inasmuch as Paul states that *flesh* and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

"I see plainly that I must relinquish that text," I said. "And now I remember, even the Rabbi Menasseh Ben Israel, though he endeavours to force a reference to the resurrection of the body into many passages which certainly cannot apply to it, asserts that this text in no way refers to the resurrection of the body. Mr. Barnes, also, though as he says 'contrary to what he had hoped,' feels himself compelled to abandon the notion that this statement contains any reference to the resurrection of the body. Many other commentators whose names have escaped my recollection likewise coincide in this view."

"Had it been otherwise," said Dokeos, "Job would have been a prophet, instead of being the chief personage in a poem. He would have deserved to rank among the heroes of faith enumerated by Paul. Instead of this, he is presented as an example of patience; which, indeed, implies what I have said, that Job patiently waited for the appearance of his Vindicator, who in this life verified his expectation by fulfilling it, and finally manifested His favour in the gifts of health and abundance."

ISAIAH XXVI. 19.

"The whole subject grows clearer to me," I remarked. "There is, however, the statement of Isaiah:—'Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead' (Isa. xxvi. 19). What does this mean?"

"The prophet," said Dokeos, "is predicting the return of the Jews from their Babylonish captivity, and like Ezekiel, in the vision of the dry bones (chap. xxxvii.), he employs this vivid imagery. Yet in both prophecies, the return of Israel from captivity, and their triumph over

their enemies, are the Divinely appointed symbols of the soul's return to the spiritual Canaan of faith and love, from the captivity and desolation of sin. Hence, the figure of a resurrection which these prophets have employed, symbolizes the resurrection of regeneration. That Isaiah is not speaking of any resuscitation of dead bodies is evident from the 14th verse:—"They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made their memory to perish." Unless, then, we believe that only the Jews are to rise from the dead, and that their enemies are not to rise, the passage cannot be made to apply to the resurrection of the body.

"Further, the phrase 'the earth shall cast out her dead' most certainly does not mean that the dead bodies which are in the earth shall rise therefrom—the meaning needed, if the statement refers to the resuscitation of dead bodies. Lowth, the translator of Isaiah, has far more correctly rendered the words: 'The earth shall cast forth, as an abortion, the deceased tyrants:' the deceased tyrants are to be cast forth; and the casting forth means an utter rejection and destruction of them.

"Further still, the words 'together with' are not in the original; and the words 'my dead body' are a strangely inadequate rendering of the Hebrew. The passage is, as Lowth has translated it,—'Thy dead shall live, my deceased, they shall arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust!' The passage, therefore, contains no reference to the resuscitation of dead bodies."

"But," I remarked, "does not the use of the image, by both Isaiah and Ezekiel, show that the idea of a resurrection of the body was familiar to the Jews?"

"Even if it were so," rejoined Dokeos, "we must ask, Whence did the Jews learn it? Not from the Scrip-

tures ; for they do not teach it ! The Jews, at the time of the First Advent, had a notion of such a resurrection, which Martha expressed at the grave of Lazarus, and which the Lord corrected and rebuked, by declaring that He is the resurrection and the life, and that those who live in Him and believe in Him should never die, and that even those who before had been spiritually dead, and yet who believed, should likewise live. The fact that such a false notion existed at the time, only proves that *that* idea of the resurrection was not the true view of life and immortality, which was, as the Apostle says, 'brought to light by the gospel.' But the use of an image or figure does not prove that the idea embodied in the figure either had a basis of literal fact, or was a familiar idea to those among whom it was employed. What is the literal basis of 'He shall give them the morning star' ? The Jews were, doubtless, acquainted with the idea of a resurrection of the dead : it was their subsequent carnal and materialistic commentary that led them to pervert this truth into meaning, what is quite another thing, a resurrection of the *dead body*."

## EZEKIEL XXVII. 1-14.

"The same line of remark," continued Dokeos, "applies to the symbolical vision of Ezekiel. In the *letter*, it refers to the restoration and conversion of the Jews, as is evident from the conclusion of the prophecy, ver. 11-14. In the *spirit*, the prophecy refers to the moral resurrection of the soul from a state of bondage under sin, banishment from the heavenly Canaan of love and light, spiritual exile and degradation, into states of joy and peace, love and life, received from the Lord. It is only by the erroneous canon that a *spiritual*, or a *national*, resurrection must imply a *physical* resurrection, that some

have been led to imagine that this vision prefigured a literal resurrection of dead bodies. But this forces a meaning into the passage which, if it had been in the Divine Mind, must have been clearly expressed. The canon is, also, founded in error; or, otherwise when it is said, 'The Church is the Lamb's bride and wife,' one might conclude, with equal reason, that a literal and natural marriage must take place between the Lamb and the Church, or there could be no reference to such a spiritual marriage. Besides, to say that this vision is a prefigurement of a literal resurrection, is open to this fatal objection—that it will then be confined to the house of Israel! This, again, as with the prophecy through Isaiah, would make the prophet deny that the resurrection of the dead is universal. The limitation points out the true purpose and real meaning of the prophecy; literally, the restoration of Israel after the flesh to Canaan; and spiritually, the resurrection of true Israel, after the spirit, into holiness, love, and life."

"Your reply satisfies me," I said.

#### DANIEL XII. 2.

"Yet," I continued, "Daniel says—'Many of them which sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt' (Dan. xii. 2). Does not this assert a resurrection of the material body?"

"Surely not," rejoined Dokeos; "for this statement, also, is limited, while the resurrection is certainly to be universal. It is limited by the use of the phrase 'Many of them.' *Many* may mean *all*; but '*many of them*,' of necessity, implies selection and exclusion; hence it is equivalent to asserting that *some shall not rise*. This fact lends weight to the opinion, held by the most learned

Jews, that the '*awaking*' is to be confined to those who awake to life; and that the shame and everlasting contempt of the others will consist in their not awaking, but, on the contrary, in their being destroyed. Hence it comes that many have been led by this passage to believe that the resurrection will be limited: the Jews restricted it to their own nation; and some Christians have imagined it would be restricted to all believers. If this passage refers to a future resuscitation of dead bodies, such conclusions would be as just as they are inevitable. Because the prophecy does not allude to this subject, it warrants no such inference.

"The words have, however, a literal and political signification. The ancient commentators traced in the preceding chapter (xi.) the wars between the Greek kings of Egypt and Syria, and the death of Antiochus Epiphanes, a type of Antichrist. Judas Macabæus had, a year prior to the last event, repaired and beautified the Temple, and founded the Feast of the Dedication, a feast which the Lord observed (John x. 22), thus recognising its importance, and indeed its divine origin. The twelfth chapter promises a deliverance for the Jews, and then comes the passage now in question. In this connection they that '*sleep in the dust*' figuratively denote those who had submitted to their masters, and had conformed to their pagan customs and worship; they who should awake to life were those who would return to, and assist in re-establishing the worship of the true God, and who should thus obtain everlasting honour in this world and eternal happiness in the next; they who should be left to shame and everlasting contempt meant those who would refuse to abandon the customs and worship of their pagan masters, who would oppose the efforts of their countrymen to obtain deliverance, and who thus should incur everlasting disgrace."

"You remind me of the fact that Porphyry, the opponent of Christianity, made the exactness of this prophecy as referring to these events an argument against its authenticity as a prophecy, pretending that it must have been written after the event," I remarked.

"True," replied Dokeos. "In the use of such symbolry, as prefiguring such events, Daniel used the prophetic style; for, as we have seen, both Isaiah and Ezekiel had previously employed such symbols to express the restoration of the Jews to their own land. There is, therefore, little reason to doubt that this is the true literal interpretation of the passage."

"More modern interpreters, however, have striven to find in these prophecies," I remarked, "a prediction of the still future return of the Jews to their own land."

"Even if their scheme were correct, which it is not," replied Dokeos, "the words in question would then mean no more than a figurative description of the respective state of those who would unite with the people, and of those who would not. Hence in either of these schemes of interpretation, the words you have cited do not, and cannot refer to the resuscitation of dead bodies from the literal dust of the earth; in which, also, the vast majority of dead bodies are not to be found."

"I follow, and am compelled to agree with you," I observed. "But what does the prophecy really mean?"

Dokeos waved his hand toward Sophos, who replied:—"To sleep, and to sleep in the dust are correspondences frequently employed in the Word, and they signify to be in a merely natural and even sensual state; to awake to everlasting life is to become aroused from this state of mere natural-mindedness and sensuality, and to become spiritual, when they inherit and receive eternal happiness. On the other hand, to be left to shame and

everlasting contempt is indeed to rise into the world of spirits, but only that they may pass into the society of infernal spirits, and enter into misery, which is their eternal state. Thus, the 'sleeping in the dust' does not refer to the dead body, but to the man himself, regarded as to his internal and spiritual state; and the resurrection does not refer to the dead body, but to the man. To a similar effect it is said by Isaiah, 'Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;' and also 'Shake thyself *from the dust*; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem.' So it is said of the Virgins, that while the Bridegroom tarried 'they slept;' and the Apostle likewise exclaims, 'Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light' (Eph. v. 14). No one so misunderstands these words as to imagine that they are addressed to, or spoken of dead bodies sleeping unconsciously in the dust of the natural earth; all understand them to refer to the internal and spiritual state of men who are living; and in like manner the words of Daniel must be understood."

1 COR. XV. 51, 52. 1 THESS. IV. 13-17.

"Your explanation seems to me reasonable," I remarked, "and I am deeply indebted to you. Permit me now to ask an explanation of one more difficulty, and it is my last on this subject. Paul says, 'Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed' (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52); and he says also, in another epistle, — 'I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even



as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so we shall be ever with the Lord' (1 Thess. iv. 13-17). Was not, then, the idea of a resurrection of the material body in the mind of the Apostle?"

"Our only clue to the idea which was in the mind of the Apostle is to be found in the words he has employed," rejoined Dokeos. "He speaks of some who sleep, and of some who shall be changed: of those who 'sleep in Jesus,' he says, that 'God shall bring them with Him;' of those who will be 'changed,' he says, that they shall be 'caught up together with them,' whom God will bring, in 'the clouds,' to meet the Lord 'in the air;' and of both those who shall be changed, and of those who sleep in Jesus, he declares, that thenceforth they all shall be 'ever with the Lord.' We will consider these two classes of statements.

"Those which sleep in Jesus are the first to be named. These are already with the Lord. But to be with the Lord they must *already have risen*: they were already what the Apostle desired to be, 'absent from the body, and present with the Lord.' They were to be 'the spirits of just men made perfect,' already possessing spiritual bodies, and dwelling in the spiritual world. No subsequent resurrection can be promised to them; for

their resurrection had already been realized. They were among the 'raised,' of whom the Saviour spoke; among the 'raised' whom John saw. These, Paul says, the Lord shall bring with Him. He does *not* say that their material bodies shall be raised from the earth, in order that afterwards they might be brought with the Lord; though this is what he needed to have said if he had intended to teach such a notion of the resurrection. They were already 'made perfect:' to their perfection a return to their decayed material bodies would add nothing. There is, therefore, no promise of such a resuscitation of material bodies made to these.

"Nor is there any such promise made to those which '*remain alive.*' These, the Apostle tells us, shall be so changed as that they may be 'caught up in the air,' and ever afterwards 'be with the Lord.' What is the nature and extent of this change to be wrought on them? They must cease to be 'flesh and blood,' according to the Apostle's own statement, for 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.' The slow separation between the body and spirit which takes place in the case of those who die, should, in the case of those to be thus instantaneously changed, be superseded by a separation so rapid that it would be effected in 'a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' The Apostle could not mean that the spiritual body, which had ceased to be 'flesh and blood,' could still remain *material*: the 'earthly house of this tabernacle,' the body of flesh, by the being in which men are 'absent from the Lord,' must have been 'put off' in order that these ascending ones might have 'put on' the 'house not made with hands, the building of God, eternal in the heavens.' Only in this house 'not made with hands' could men be 'eternal in the heavens,' or 'ever with the Lord.' Surely then, by this body which

is to ascend into the clouds, and to fly in the air, the Apostle could not mean a sort of spiritual-material body; for who can think of a material body being caught up into the clouds, or of its flying in the air, or of its continuing to live if by any means it could get there?

"There is no necessity for supposing that a thing so improbable should ever take place. The Apostle had previously taught that man *has* two bodies; not that he had then the natural, and should have the spiritual, but that 'there *is* a natural body,' and 'there *is*'—not *will be*—'a spiritual body;' that the natural body is sown, and that the spiritual body rises. It is therefore evident that those who should be caught up in the air must have put off the material body; and that they should thus ascend in a spiritual body; which, in their case, certainly could not be the old, the former natural body resuscitated. The idea in the Apostle's mind at the moment, there is little reason to doubt, was the translation of Elijah, who underwent such an instantaneous change, the elements of whose material body were dissipated, and who, like Moses, in a spiritual body, ministered to the Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration. By the 'change' Paul evidently means the preparation for the translation—in the prophet's case, represented by his journey and the consummating whirlwind—and in their being 'caught up' the translation itself. But the 'change' would involve the destruction of the 'flesh and blood' which 'cannot inherit the kingdom,' the putting off of that material corruptibility which could not 'inherit incorruption.'

"Hence neither the statement as to those who are to be brought with Him by the Lord, nor the statement as to those who should be instantaneously changed, and translated, lends any countenance to the notion of a resuscitation of the old material body."

"But the Apostle also says, 'the dead in Christ shall rise first,'" I observed.

"True," replied Dokeos. "The next question is, therefore, Do these constitute a third class apart, both from those whom the Lord shall bring with Him, and from those who remain alive at His coming, and who, the Apostle says, are to be changed?"

"No," I rejoined, "if we suppose that those whom the Lord will bring with Him shall animate these bodies which were to rise first, and which then should be caught up in the air; and that afterwards those also who were remaining alive should then be caught up, and so the resurrection of the dead, and the equivalent changing of the living, should close the scene."

"But does not this force a meaning into the Apostle's words rather than find their true meaning?" asked Dokeos. "For what you suggest is certainly not what Paul affirms. He says the dead in Christ are to rise first; but he does not say that there are two classes of persons who are to be caught up into the air. What, then, is the force of the word translated *first*? It is *prōton-proteron*. But this word is rendered in many cases *before*, or *previously*, as in Matt. v. 24,—'Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, *first* (*prōton, previously*) be reconciled to thy brother,' etc.; in Matt. xii. 29,—'How can one enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he *first* (*prōton, previously*) bind the strong man?' in Mark ix. 11,—'Why say the Scribes that Elias must *first* (*prōton, previously*) come?' in 2 Thess. ii. 3,—'That day shall not come except there come a falling away *first* (*prōton, previously*);' in 1 Tim. iii. 10,—'Let these also *first* (*prōton, previously*) be proved;' and in many other passages. According to this, a common usage of language, the word rendered

first should more properly be rendered *previously*: 'the dead in Christ shall rise previously,' or 'shall have previously risen.' These are the dead in Christ whom the Lord would bring with Him; and who must have previously risen, in spiritual bodies, into the spiritual world, in order that they might have been with Him, and that they might come with Him.

"Observe also, it is not here said that their dead *bodies* shall rise: *that* is nowhere said. The *dead* shall rise (*oi nekroi*, in the masculine gender, and never *sômata* in the neuter gender). Unless, therefore, those who should have *previously risen* constitute a third and utterly unknown and utterly incomprehensible class, they must mean those whom the Lord would bring with Him. But if they mean these, it is clear that these had been previously raised into the spiritual world; and that they were not buried in the earth; nor had they again to rise therefrom. This clause is really a parenthesis, to meet a tacit objection, and should be so read: 'For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God (and the dead in Christ shall have previously arisen); then we which remain alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.' Thus read all the difficulty and confusion vanishes."

"But this view presupposes a gradual, a *successive* resurrection of the dead—for I must abandon for ever the phrase and the idea of the resurrection of dead bodies," I said; "while the statement of Paul in Corinthians seems to imply a *simultaneous* arising,—'the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.' I give up the resuscitation of dead *bodies*; but I am not clear how a successive resurrection, taking place generation by generation, can be harmonized with the Apostle's

evident idea of a *simultaneous* resurrection, consequent on the sounding of the trumpet."

"The point is important, and the argument is fairly urged," replied Dokeos. "But you must perceive that if you relinquish the idea of the resuscitation of dead bodies, and believe that those who had died were with the Lord, you really admit that they had risen, and therefore could not expect an additional resurrection! All difficulties vanish so soon as the truth, which is ever consistent, is seen. If, then, the truth is that, as stated in Thessalonians, 'the dead in Christ had previously risen,' and the Apostle is a consistent teacher of truth, these words now under consideration cannot contradict the truth. Do they, however, teach that the resurrection is a *sudden and simultaneous* one?"

"Paul's statement to the Thessalonians, 'I say this by the word of the Lord,' does not mean that the Lord had revealed this specially and personally to him; but that he was quoting the words of the Saviour, which you will find in Matthew: 'They shall see the *Son of Man* coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and He shall send His angel with a *great sound of a trumpet*, and they shall gather *His elect* from the four winds, *from one end of heaven to the other*' (Matt. xxiv. 30, 31). Here, then, was Paul's authority for the 'Lord's coming in the clouds;' for the 'sound of the trumpet;' and for the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living. But in the Lord's own words, the gathering of the '*elect*' was to be effected in heaven, or rather in '*the heavens*,' (ἀπ' ἄκρων οὐρανῶν ἕως ἄκρων αὐτῶν, *ap' akrōn ouranōn eōs akrōn autōn*). Nothing was said by the Lord of a simultaneous resurrection; and as the Apostle derived his doctrine from the Lord's words, which also he partially quotes, he cannot intend a simul-

taneous resurrection. The gathering of the elect from one end of the heavens to the other is the Lord's statement, but if the elect were in the heavens they must have already risen, and have risen successively as they died; hence neither in the Lord's words, nor in Paul's part quotation and part paraphrase of those words, is the notion taught of a resurrection of dead material bodies, or of a simultaneous resurrection of the spiritual bodies of the elect! Further, while we remember the Lord's own phrase in this prediction, *the elect*, the angels 'shall gather *the elect*,' can it surprise us that Paul should restrict in both epistles the resurrection and translation to those alone who were believers, or the '*elect*'?"

"Your explanation is even luminous, Dokeos," I replied. "Paul certainly could not mean more than the Saviour intended; nor can his words contain more than is contained in the Lord's words, which, as you say, he partly quoted, and partly paraphrased."

#### THE APOSTLES' IDEA OF THE TIME OF THE SECOND COMING.

"But," I continued, "Paul seems to have anticipated the Lord's Second Advent to take place in his day."

"There is no reason to doubt that he, in common with the other Apostles, did anticipate such an immediate Second Coming, or that he expected the Second Advent to be a *personal* coming of the Lord in the natural clouds. The lapse of time since the days of the Apostles has proved that the one opinion was a misapprehension. But the same cause which led to the one misapprehension led also to the other; it was understanding the Lord's predictions, couched in the prophetic language of symbolry, according to the mere letter, as though the sym-

Lols had been scientific statements as to what should absolutely take place. In doing this, he repeated the error of the Scribes and Pharisees, who rejected the Saviour because He did not fulfil the expectations which they had derived from their literal interpretation of the prophecies concerning Him.

"In this literal manner Paul, and the other Apostles, understood such statements as 'This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled' (Matt. xxiv. 34); 'There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom' (Matt. xvi. 28); and the statement concerning John, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' (John xxi. 23). Peter and the Apostles were certainly mistaken as to the true meaning of the last-cited passage; and John, writing the Gospel towards the close of his life, notices and comments upon the misapprehension.

"The Apostles certainly did expect an immediate coming of the Lord. In addition to '*We which remain alive*,' and '*we shall be changed*,' Paul says, 'The Lord *is at hand*' (Phil. iv. 5); 'Exhorting one another; so much the more as you see *the day approaching*. . . . For *yet a little while* He that shall come will come, and *will not tarry*' (Heb. x. 25, 37); 'Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: the *night is far spent*; the *day is at hand*' (Rom. xiii. 12). Peter also says, 'To Him who *is ready to judge* the quick and the dead. . . . The *end* of all things *is at hand*' (1 Pet. iv. 5). James likewise says, 'The coming of the Lord *draweth nigh*: behold the Judge *standeth at the door*' (James v. 8, 9). Even John says, 'Little children, *it is the last time*' (1 John ii. 18). So Jude declares that *then* was being fulfilled the prophecy that 'there should be mockers *in the last time*'



(Jude 24). Many other similar statements can be found in the Apostolic writings."

"But how can you reconcile this evident misapprehension with their inspiration?" I asked.

Sophos answered me: "The Apostles were not inspired in the same sense and way as were the prophets and evangelists, who wrote the very words of God. The Apostles wrote, as Peter said of Paul, 'according to the wisdom given' unto them. It is needless to prove this, for the Church admits it, as, unhappily, it claims no higher inspiration for the prophets and evangelists. The Apostles were not omniscient; the Lord expressly declared that it was not for *them* 'to know the times or the seasons' (Acts i. 7); and that 'of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, nor the angels which are in heaven' (Mark viii. 32). What was necessary in order to qualify them for preaching the Gospel, and for proclaiming the first advent, was revealed to them: they needed no more, and no more was given."

"This thought explains much which otherwise is inexplicable," I said. "But, Sophos, it will prove most difficult of belief to many, to whom such a limitation of apostolic knowledge will appear almost blasphemous!"

"We have to do with what is true, and not merely with what will be believed," rejoined Sophos. "I furnish you with an explanation of the misapprehension, which ought to be welcomed, and which certainly ought not to be regarded as blasphemous."

"Sophos, I am properly rebuked," I replied. "It is mine now to listen, and afterwards it will be mine to meditate, and conclude as to the truth of your teachings. Dokeos, proceed."

RESURRECTION IN THE LIGHT OF REASON.

"I have shown you, then," resumed Dokeos, "that the resuscitation of the material body is not taught in the Scriptures ; that the resurrection which the Word teaches is of the spiritual body ; that this resurrection is immediately after death, and is continually going on ; and that when once the natural body is cast off, it will never be resumed. Need I show you that this erroneous notion, the future resurrection of the material body, is utterly unreasonable, and so full of practical difficulties as to deserve to be styled impossible?"

"No, Dokeos," I replied ; "I have long felt the force, and wondered at the number, of the arguments to which the idea lies exposed on the side of philosophy. The resurrection of the material body is not essential to the continued existence, or to the immortality of man ; for after death each must continue to live. There are no natural analogies which could suggest or illustrate the idea ; for in nature we everywhere see succession, and nowhere a material resurrection. Each man has had several bodies, every particle of which he has successively thrown off ; for the substance of every organ in the body is continually being renewed. Physiologists tell us that such a renewal of every part of the body takes place, at the furthest, every seven years. All this substance once formed as truly a part of the man as the last body he possessed. If, then, his material body is to be raised, it might well be asked, Which body? If it is said the last, *that* was the most feeble and decrepit of all ; if it is said the first, *that* was but a new-born babe. But the material substances temporarily combined in his body successively belong to many bodies ; they have been taken into the body, assimilated by it, decayed in it, excreted by it,

to re-enter into vegetable forms of life, which, in their turn, are consumed by animals, and which, in their turn, are eaten by other human beings; and thus the endless circle of transformation goes ceaselessly on. If the resurrection were of material bodies, to which of the many bodies of which it once formed part would each particle of matter belong? Some have been burned, some devoured—all have become remingled with the elements—how shall they be regathered? If the resurrection body is to be in any sense *the* body which the man once possessed, there must be in each a something which should constitute the basis of the identity of each body—a something which was not interchangeable, as well as not capable of being destroyed. What is that something, and where is it? The imaginary bone *Luz*, of the Pharisees, was invented as an expedient to meet this difficulty; but its existence is a supposition which no anatomist would sanction. I had to compel reason to submit to faith in this matter, thinking that the doctrine was revealed, and to content myself with the thought that nothing was impossible to God. I had to take refuge in ‘miracle’ to explain the otherwise unreasonable.”

“The motive was praiseworthy,” said Sophos, “but the self-abnegation was an unnecessary sacrifice. Although the province of faith transcends that of reason, it does not contradict reason. When reason can discern that an article of faith involves belief in a contradiction, that article of faith becomes forthwith unreasonable, and should be abandoned by reasonable men. Reason was given to save man from believing in contradictory propositions: faith was given to lift men beyond the limits of what reason without faith could ever ascertain or understand. It is only as reasoning beings that we can exercise or even possess faith; and they are false to the noblest

faculty of their manhood who know that their faith is contrary to their reasonable perceptions, and still cling, despite their reason, to their faith. The notion that reason is to be kept in subjection to faith locks up the Church ; for what can open it save an understanding enlightened by the Lord ? ”

“ The distinction is valuable, Sophos,” I observed, “ and shall be treasured. Faith must supplement reason, but should never contradict it.”

“ Beyond the arguments you have urged,” added Dokeos, “ there are others worthy of being remembered. If the same body is to be raised, there would be giants and dwarfs at the resurrection ; there would also be malformed, defective bodies, such as may be seen every day in the world ; white, black, yellow, and copper-coloured races such as now exist ; the ugly, the maimed and disfigured, such as are every day born, and in which human spirits are imprisoned ; for if each is to have ‘ the same body ’ that he or she had in the natural world, all the differences which characterized the purer body will again be needed to characterize ‘ the same body ’ when each spirit resumes it.

“ If, again, we regard the subject from the spiritual side, the conclusion is similarly opposed to the notion of such a resuscitation of the material body. The resuscitation of the body is not necessary to mutual recognition in the spiritual world. Immediately after Peter’s eyes were opened, on the Mount of Transfiguration, he knew Moses and Elias, without any resuscitation of the material body. The rich man in the Parable also recognised Lazarus, and knew Abraham. Nor is it necessary for the sake of rewards and punishments. It is not the material body that is conscious of pain or pleasure, but the man’s mind in the body. The spiritual body is far

more acutely sensitive than man is, while incrustated with material substance. Hence the bliss of rewards or the anguish of punishment in the spiritual world are far greater, and more keenly felt, than could be possible to a material organization. And, finally, if we say that the resurrection-body is to be material, then the fire of the lake must likewise be material, and the rewards of heaven must also be suited to such a risen material body, and thus we should materialize the heavens, the hells, and all the spiritual world! Surely the materialism of your times could not ask for a more carnal and natural-minded view than this!"

"But why, Sophos," I asked, "have views so intrinsically materialistic been permitted by the Head of the Church to remain in His Church?"

"Foregleams of the truth have almost in all ages been given to the best, purest, and wisest men. These have often led such writers or speakers into what were manifest contradictions of their admitted doctrinal teachings. It would not be difficult to collect from the writings and teachings of such men most convincing testimonies to the truth. But the sanction of authority has been given by Councils and Bishops to the lower and more degraded view, which, because it was more nearly on the level of ordinary minds, was the more readily and willingly received by ordinary thinkers. The opinion has been permitted to prevail because the natural man supposes, and has supposed, that it is the body alone which lives; unless, therefore, he believed that the body was again to receive life he would have altogether denied the resurrection. Though this error has been permitted, and many follies have been uttered as to what has been termed 'the disembodied spirit,' yet the Divine Mercy has kept alive in the hearts of the faithful a belief that after death men continue to live, that friends recognise their friends,

that all are judged, that the wicked are sent away to hell, and that the good go to heaven ; and many have believed that by saying masses for the dead they can be removed from a place of purificatory punishment and be elevated to heaven. In this confused manner belief in the truth has been preserved, notwithstanding the doctrinal errors which have at the same time prevailed. Thousands who internally believe the truth will gladly receive the tidings which will relieve them from the mental confusion which the erroneous doctrine has produced.

“As time advances, the number of those who will be capable of perceiving the distinctions between what is natural or material and what is spiritual will increase : their faith will be an enlightened faith ; their reason will be a believing intelligence. The Word of God will also be seen by them to expand in meaning as their minds increase in intelligence : they will outgrow many erroneous, because so restricted, opinions of their forefathers ; and rejoicing in their new-found mental liberty and power, they will strive to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith. You need not fear the ultimate result, though you may possibly feel dismayed at some of the symptoms which will attend this intellectual development. The Christian religion is true, although the interpretations thereof given by one age may be quite unsuited to the intellectual condition of the succeeding age. But to outgrow former interpretations is so far from outgrowing the Christian religion, that only by such an outgrowing of old interpretations can genuine faith in Christianity become rooted in the minds and hearts and lives of men. These words are words of wisdom, my friend, and you will do well to remember them.”

“I will not only remember, but I will meditate upon and teach them,” I exclaimed ; “for they seem to me to be the very truth.”



## CHAPTER VI.

### WHAT DO THE ANGELS DO?

**N**OW," said Dokeos, "we are in a position to converse on one of your earliest questions—'What do the angels do?'"

"Permit me a moment," I observed. "I perceive that there is a system of spiritual philosophy in what you have been endeavouring to teach me, in which each separate principle depends on that which precedes it. Is it not so?"

"It is so," replied Sophos. "And when you remember what we have said,—for you will remember, inasmuch as you love the truth, and that which enters into the love is written in the heart and cannot be forgotten,—and when you endeavour to arrange what you have heard into an orderly series—for such an arrangement is the basis of all right understanding—you will see the connection and dependence of the various principles which the system comprehends; and you will then be able to decide whether or not it is true."

"You certainly take great pains to teach me," I remarked.

"No labour is too great to teach any one mind truths which it is important he should know," rejoined Sophos. "Besides, every man owes this debt to truth, to endeavour to communicate to others the particular truths which he has been enabled to learn. In such ministrations of use the angels delight; for, loving others better than they love themselves, they would that all should come to the knowledge of truth; and would think no labour too great by which this end could be attained."

"You bring me back to the point," I said. "Have, then, the angels employments?"

#### HAVE THE ANGELS EMPLOYMENTS?

"God," replied Dokeos, "is the infinite Economist. He has made nothing without an adequate purpose, definite powers, and specific use. He has made nothing in vain. To whomsoever He has given any faculty, He has thereby indicated the necessity of employing the faculty; He has further intimated a promise of an opportunity for its employment; and has likewise implied that the use which can result from the employment of the special faculty possessed by any one person is essential to the perfection of all. God-given faculties therefore imply uses; powers mean functions; abilities indicate duties.

"The gift of intellect implies the exercise of that intellect, and also the existence of subjects on which it may be exercised. The gift of affection implies the exercise of affection, and the existence of objects of love. Men on earth are mercifully endowed with intelligence, affection, and operative abilities: the manifest intention in the endowment is that men should employ their



intelligence to increasingly learn and understand truth ; their affections to desire and love what is good ; their operative abilities to execute the desires of their wills.

“ Angels are men more richly and variously endowed than their congeners on earth. Their superior endowments only the more clearly indicate definite uses. Their greater intelligence enables them to learn more rapidly, more accurately, and more comprehensively the truth, which is inexhaustible because it is infinite. Their more intense affectional natures, while they lift them into being more fully ‘ likenesses of God,’ the Infinitely loving, indicate that they must love more deeply and more variously than can men. Their grander executive abilities fit them for nobler achievements, greater variety of uses, more beneficial and more perfect work. It must be intended that angels shall exercise the gifts which they have received from the Lord ; and in their case, as in the case of man on earth, faculties imply uses, powers mean functions, and abilities point to work.

“ The more fully a man receives the Spirit of God the more is his usefulness increased. It deepens, broadens, and sharpens his intelligence ; it enlarges his sympathies and elevates his love ; it enhances the sweetness, tenderness, gentleness, loyalty and the activity of all the self-sacrificing emotions ; it exalts the labours of men, ever inspiring new desires to serve, ever prompting to new deeds of service. The soul that loves must labour to be of use to the objects of its love. The only possible way in which a soul can show that it truly loves God is by manifesting love to man. Life in heaven is a richer and fuller reception of the Divine Spirit than men on earth are capable of obtaining : angels, therefore, will only be mightier ‘ fellow-workers together with God’ for the promotion of every Divine purpose. God is the great Master

Worker, and it must be the joy of the angels to become the instruments of His providence, under-workers 'doing His pleasure,' the ministers of His will. The Saviour said, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;' thus setting the seal of His Divine authority on the nobleness and dignity of work."

"All this I am prepared to admit, Dokeos," I observed. "I cannot conceive of an *idle angel*; I cannot associate the ideas of idleness and heaven. Yet worship is work; the contemplation of the Divine perfections is an employment of intellect."

"Say rather that true work is worship," rejoined Sophos. "It is to be much deplored that the notions of heaven which are usually entertained have come through the vitiated channels of the rightly styled 'dark ages.' The follies of monasticism have done much to pervert and injure human ideas on subjects connected with angelic life. The notion that true worship can be most fittingly expressed by continual singing and praying; that the contemplative life is the highest ideal of life; that the ordinary duties of daily life are incompatible with the nobler type of existence; that the celibate state is for both man and woman the most acceptable and purest condition; that marriage has something in it which is unclean in the sight of God, and which should be avoided by man:—such notions, which infect the ordinary ideas of believers as to heaven, have been fostered by monasticism, and are mistakes and follies. They have led many to believe that angels were all alike; that the chief, if not the only occupation of immense numbers of them consists in singing, playing on golden harps, and prayer; that all the inhabitants of heaven are sexless and celibate; that friendship is the only love known among the saved; and that the contemplation of the Divine perfections

and glory is almost the only exercise provided for angelic intelligence."

"Perhaps," I observed, "the existence of such ideas originated monasticism, rather than that monasticism originated such ideas."

"True," rejoined Sophos. "But monasticism developed such notions into a system. It also founded institutions whereby they might be carried into practical effect. It thus formulated superstition, and lent the weight of the authority of bishops and abbots to notions derogatory to God, because essentially destructive of all the God-implemented characteristics of the human soul."

"Do you affirm, then, that angels have sex, and that there are marriages in heaven?" I asked.

"Yes," replied Sophos. "Angels are men and women between whom married love is not only possible, but also the highest, purest, and most prolific of affections. But on this point we shall converse more fully presently. Dokeos has not yet completed his general argument."

"The perfection of society on earth," resumed Dokeos, "consists in the endless variety of genius possessed by its various members. Society would certainly not be more perfect if all men possessed the same tastes, aptitudes, and idiosyncrasies. In whatever nation the greatest variety of genius is to be found, there the greatest variety of uses are performed, each perfecting the processes by which he works, each continually making new discoveries and inventions, and each becoming increasingly dexterous in administering to the welfare of all. God has provided for such a diversity. He has not made any two souls alike in character or aptitude. By this almost endless diversity of intellectual gifts, He has provided for an equal diversity of service. All this variety of gifts is good: it adds to the completeness of mankind.

"But if this almost endless variety of character, fitting men for a corresponding variety of uses, be a good thing, this good thing will not be obliterated by the transit of the human soul from the natural into the spiritual world. Death does not destroy anything which was in the soul, or which belonged to it : all that death does is to separate the spirit from its former covering of flesh. Everything that previously pertained to the soul will still be in it—aptitudes, tastes, faculties, and the specific character which caused each man to be himself, and different from all others.

"Do you not see, then, that, if this variety of aptitudes is a good thing ; if it necessarily implies a corresponding variety of uses ; and if this variety of faculties is taken by the souls of men into the spiritual world, it must likewise imply a corresponding variety of uses in that world ? Consequently, uses corresponding to those of earth must exist and be possible to the souls of men in the spiritual world. Inasmuch as the number of the spirits of men in the spiritual world is far greater than the number of any nation or generation, seeing that all the spirits of all men who have ever lived are there, the variety of faculties, and of uses indicated in the gift of those faculties, must be beyond calculation greater than those which are visible on earth."

"It is only reasonable to suppose this to be the case," I replied.

"Hence, you may think of the wise and good of earth, who have passed into their eternal homes in the heavens, and ask,—'Will that same angelic use which would absorb and satisfy the whole soul of a Newton equally absorb and satisfy the soul of a Mendelssohn ?' Can you conceive of two such minds as Milton and Faraday deriving an equal amount of happiness from the study of

the same angelic theme, and pursued in exactly the same manner ? Can you think that all who were good among the philosophers of Egypt, the poets and artists of Greece, the legislators of Rome, the mystics of India, the temple-builders of Central America, the mechanics of modern times, and the literati of the far-off future, could alike find their fulness of blessedness in the same activity, revolving in the same routine, investigating the same problems, wrought out in the same methods, and by the use of the same calculus ? The poets, painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, scientists, philosophers, mechanics, and legislators of the earth, have all possessed God-given faculties, fitting them for the performance of their high, and, if rightly regarded, even holy uses among men : death has obliterated nothing of their aptitudes, intellectual tastes, and genius : what they had and were as men they have taken with them into the spiritual world : nothing of theirs has perished save the material body, by means of which they lived and wrought in the natural world : their heavenly state, consequently, must furnish to them scope for the orderly exercise of their special characteristics, in which exercise alone they could find their true and individual joy !”

“Such an idea, though if it were admitted, would revolutionize all our notions of heaven, seems at least reasonable,” I remarked.

“Ordinary notions about heaven sorely need to be revolutionized,” rejoined Dokeos. “If heaven were a temple, there must still be diversities of use. Were it a vast church, there must needs be a variety of officials. Were it a feast, difference of place and of service would still be inevitable. Heaven is a perfect state of human society ; and its perfection consists in the diversity of the reception by its inhabitants of life, love, and intelligence

from the Lord ; and in the variety of uses which the angels are thus fitted to perform. Life in heaven is full and complete. Fulness of life, however, must mean ample scope for the exercise of all orderly and God-given faculties ; subjects provided for the exercise of all intellectual powers ; objects supplied for every orderly affection ; and active uses subserving the general good, in the performance of which each angel may find his fulness of active and conscious joy."

" But this is to say that heaven is only a more beautiful, orderly, and perfect earth !" I remarked. " It is also saying that there is a definite ratio of proportion between our earthly life and our life hereafter."

" And if the earth-life is, in any true sense, a preparation for our heaven-life, must there not exist such a proportion between the two ?" replied Dokeos. " The love of the Lord possible to a man on earth is surely a preparation for his fuller love of the Lord in heaven. The joys which such a love inspires must surely be a preparation, as well as a foretaste, of the joys to be inspired by this love in heaven. Delight in charity, in beneficence, in ministration and service, are all such foretastes of heavenly delights. The sweet and pure pleasures derived from the contemplation of the beautiful, from new perceptions of truth, from new achievements of art, from new discoveries in science, are surely holy and heavenly ; they are the foregleams and fore-glimpses on earth of what awaits the soul in fulness in the heavens of God. So the wisdom of earth is kindred in kind though inferior in degree to that which prevails in heaven. So the music of earth is linked to the music of heaven by the bonds of an indissoluble affinity. There is no science which has not a heavenward as well as an earthward side. Nothing was ever wrought out into fixed sub-

sistence on earth which did not first exist in the spiritual world that is in man, a conception of his mind, an object of perception and apprehension, though not yet embodied and ultimated as an object of sense.

“Do you object that such ideas are too *human*, representing that world as bearing too close a resemblance to this? I answer: It cannot be *too* human, when we remember that the inhabitants of that world are *men*; that they have taken with them into that world all the mental and emotional characteristics, and all the idiosyncrasies and specialties of taste and genius which they possessed in the natural world. I object to all other representations of heaven that they are too *un-human*; and utterly irrational, because so contrary to everything which we have known and felt as real and individual men. We stand on solid ground only so long as we remember that angels are *men*; spiritual, exalted, holy, far more perfect than earth’s wisest, purest, and mightiest, yet still *MEN*! We reason from an impregnable basis so long as we remember that the earth-life was intended to be a real preparation for life in heaven. Abolish the fixity and grossness of matter, the restrictions of space and time, the evil affections as well as the sins to which they give rise, the squalor and misery, the penury and filth, the painful drudgery and degrading toil of the earth-life; supply to executive ability a substance as plastic as ‘the stuff that dreams are made of,’ on which the *wills* of the angels can operate directly, and almost without manual exertion; exalt a million-fold the charities, amenities, and graces of existence; multiply endlessly the love and tenderness, the sweetness and blessedness, the judgment and skill, the insight and dexterity of the inhabitants; make their every purpose holy with the spirit of self-sacrifice, and every scene

around them beautiful, because the corresponding outgrowth of their affections and thoughts, and then you can form to yourself a faint and far-off conception of what is meant by life in heaven !”

#### HEAVENLY REST.

“But does not such a conception of heaven banish the idea of rest?” I asked.

Sophos answered me. “The *rest* of heaven surely does not mean the rest of idleness ! Spiritual rest is relief from temptation ; from the pain and weariness of the struggles of mortality against evil ; from the sorrows inseparable from needing to cultivate in the soil of the soul all heavenly graces and charities. The real nature of the curse was not the necessity of working—God is the great Worker ! It was the toil of contrariety and constraint, having continually to watch against and to resist the fatal tendency in the soul to revert to the wilderness condition. Before the fall, Adam had ‘to keep the garden and dress it ;’ and the labour only added to his pleasures. The *earth* mentioned in the curse was man’s natural mind, and the briers and thorns were the evils and falses which so speedily overran it. The eradication of these by temptation-conflicts and victory is man’s painful duty. In heaven, however, there shall be rest from the labour of having to resist, overcome, and destroy such noxious principles. The angels are relieved from all contrariety, and they are consequently relieved from the danger of falling into evil : they have the unalterable peace of a rest which fadeth not away.”

“Activity,” added Dokeos, “is the sign of life : inactivity is synonymous with death. The affectional act



of loving is delightful; the doing a service to those whom we love is joy-inspiring; to increase in knowledge by active study is blissful; to communicate to another the knowledges we have acquired is blessedness; to work out into ultimate forms the idea with which the soul has been charmed, as well as filled, is to realize, to some slight extent, the joy of *creating*—a joy which in its fulness enters into the perfectness of the Divine happiness. To rest from all activity would be to cease to love, which is the activity of the affections; to cease to think, which is the activity of the intellect; to cease to work, which is the activity of the executive powers. But such a cessation of activity, if total, would be a ceasing to live; for life is the orderly activity of the living form. Such a loveless, thoughtless, actionless state would be torpor, and not heaven. Angels, consequently, love, think, and work. God is the infinite activity and therefore the infinite joy: all who derive their life from Him can only find their measure of happiness in the full exercise of their finite activities, in the discovery of their most congenial use, and in the doing of it. Heavenly employments, therefore, must occupy angelic faculties; and for angels to cease to be operative would be for them to cease to enjoy."

"You have said enough to convince me of the reasonableness of the general principle, Dokeos," I rejoined. "Let us come to particulars. What do angels do?"

"Angelic uses," replied Dokeos, "may be grouped into three great classes: uses performed for men on earth; those performed for spirits in the World of Spirits; and those which are performed in the heavens. Your early questions referred to the uses performed for men, and, if you please, we will commence with these:—

## § I. WHAT DO THE ANGELS DO FOR MEN ?

“Explore your own memory and tell us what you find there on this subject.”

“Of course,” I answered, “I have believed, in a vague way, that angels are, as the Apostle says, ministering spirits, and that they minister to all who are the heirs of salvation. Admitting, as I must, that evil thoughts are insinuated into the mind by wicked spirits, I am constrained to credit angels with equal activity and in the contrary direction ; and thus to believe that they infuse into the mind true thoughts, and excite in the will good affections and desires.

“In the Scriptures, however, I find many remarkable instances of additional and personal ministration, such as that of the three angels who appeared to Abraham in the plain of Mamre, and one of whom spake as God, and was addressed as God ; and two of whom afterwards went to Sodom, to the house of Lot (Gen. xviii., xix.). When Hagar, with her son Ishmael, was dismissed from Abraham’s tents, an angel saved her from despair, and her child from death (Gen. xxi. 17). When Abraham commissioned his servant to bring for Isaac a wife from among his own people, he rehearsed the Divine promises made to him, and declared that ‘the Lord God shall send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son’ (Gen. xxiv. 7). By the ministry of angels the Lord led Jacob, who beheld them in his vision of the ladder reaching between earth and heaven, ascending and descending thereon. Jacob’s name was changed to Israel after his wrestling all night with an angel. When Jacob blessed his grandsons Manasseh and Ephraim, he said, ‘The angel who redeemed me from all evil bless the lads’ (Gen. xlviii. 16).

"I remember also that by the ministry and guardianship of angels, the Lord led the Israelites in their wanderings: 'Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in him. But if indeed thou shalt obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For Mine angel shall go before thee' (Exod. xxiii. 20-22). When the Israelites had sinned by worshipping the golden calf set up by Aaron, the Lord also said, 'Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold Mine angel shall go before thee' (Exod. xxxii. 34). So again we read, 'I will send an angel before thee, and I will drive out the Canaanite,' and the other nations, from the land (Exod. xxxiii. 2). Accordingly, when the Israelites needed to declare their history and intentions to the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, they said, 'And when we cried unto the Lord, He heard our voice, and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt' (Numb. xx. 16). This special method of God's operation must, indeed, have been uniform in the case of Israel, for Stephen declared that they 'received the law by the ministration of angels' (Acts vii. 55).

"I remember, also, that an angel appeared to Joshua at the siege of Jericho, who styled himself 'the Captain or Prince of the Lord's host,' the leader of the invisible army who fought on the side of the Israelites (Josh. v. 19-21). So an angel appeared to rebuke Israel at Boshim (Judg. ii. 1-5); another angel appeared to Joash, the father of Gideon (Judg. vi. 11-22); another angel appeared

to Manoah, the father of Samson (Judg. xiii. 3-20); another appeared to David at the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, where the pestilence that had wasted the kingdom was stayed (2 Sam. xxiv. 16); another went forth and slew the hosts of Sennacherib (Isa. xxxvi. 36); another appeared with the three Hebrew brethren in the furnace of fire, and was seen and described by Nebuchadnezzar as 'a son of the Gods' (Dan. iii. 25).

"I remember, likewise, how important a part they performed in the instruction, protection, and guidance of the prophets Elijah and Elisha, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah. Daniel especially names two—'Michael, one of the chief Princes,' and Gabriel. He also suggests, in a mysterious but very remarkable passage, that there are tutelary angels presiding over the affairs of nations, as well as guardian or ministering angels, protecting or ministering to individuals. He writes that Gabriel said, 'Fear not, Daniel; for, from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the *Prince of Persia* withstood me one-and-twenty days: but lo! *Michael, one of the chief Princes, came to help me*, and I remained there with the kings of Persia. . . . Now will I return *to fight with the Prince of Persia*; and, when I am gone forth, lo, *the Prince of Grecia shall come*, . . . and there is none that holdeth with me in these things but *Michael, your Prince*' (Dan. x. 12, 13, 20, 21).

"I remember, further, that the employment of this agency was not restricted to Old Testament times. The birth of the Baptist was foretold by the Angel Gabriel to Zacharias in the temple, and the birth of the Saviour was foretold by the same angel to Mary in Nazareth (Luke i. 19, 26). Angels instructed Joseph as to the purity of

his espoused wife, warned him of the dangers which beset the young Child, announced to him the death of Herod, and taught him to turn aside into Nazareth (Matt. i. 20; ii. 13, 19, 22). Angels announced to the shepherds who were watching their flocks the birth of the Saviour, and a multitude of them sung their new song (Luke ii. 9-15). Angels ministered unto the Saviour after the temptation in the wilderness (Matt. iv. 11); 'strengthened Him' after the agony of Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 43); and more than 'twelve legions' of them would have come at His call (Matt. xxvi. 53). Angels sat in the tomb from which Jesus had risen (John xx. 12); and conversed with the disciples after He had ascended (Acts i. 10). An angel was sent to rescue Peter and John from the prison (Acts v. 19); to Philip the Deacon, to guide him to the Ethiopian Eunuch of Queen Candace (Acts viii. 26); to the Centurion Cornelius, to direct him to Peter (Acts x. 7-22); to deliver Peter a second time from prison (Acts xii. 8); and to Paul when about to be shipwrecked (Acts xxvii. 23).

"Of course, also, the whole of the Apocalypse, from beginning to end, is built up on the idea of angelic ministration, mediation, and agency, both in regard to teaching the Apostle what was shortly to come to pass, and in regard to accomplishing the Divine purposes, as you have shown me, in the World of Spirits.

"But Dokeos," I continued, "while I believe that all these things occurred as they are recorded, they appear to me exceptional and special, rather than illustrating any universal, or even general principle."

"You surely must forget the general announcements of the Word, which prove that this principle of the Divine government is of universal application," replied Dokeos. "There is 'joy in the presence of God among the angels

over *every sinner that repenteth*' (Luke xv. 7) : angelic sympathy and consociation must be as widely operative as there are sinners who repent. 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about him that feareth the Lord, and delivereth him' (Psa. xxxiv.): angelic guardianship is, therefore, just as universal as are those who fear the Lord. 'Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation?' (Heb. i. 14): their ministrations, consequently, must be equally extended as the heirs of salvation. 'He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone' (Psa. xci. 11, 12). This promise is addressed, as the first verse of the Psalm shows, to all who make the Lord their refuge and fortress, to all who choose Him as their God, and who trust in Him. The promise was quoted to Jesus by the Tempter in the wilderness (Matt. iv. 6); but the fact that the Tempter especially referred its application to Jesus certainly does not prove that the true application of the promise was restricted to Jesus. The angels have spiritual watch over men; they strive to keep their feet in the ways of salvation; they sustain the souls of men in times of temptation and spiritual peril, lest they transgress in will or deed any of the commandments of God, or 'dash their foot against a stone.' Just as after the Lord's victory in the temptation angels ministered unto Him, so is it with every tempted and victorious human soul."

"You make out a strong case, Dokeos," I responded, "and have answered some of my early questions. I listen gladly, for I would fain be convinced."

"Why, the very fact that these heavenly men are styled *angels*, or *messengers*, implies that they are sent on missions of mercy, to bear messages of love," replied

Dokeos. "Who are the objects of such missions? To whom are such messages sent? Being guardian angels, there must ever be those whom they guard. Being ministering spirits, there must ever be those to whom they minister. Their titles describe their office and imply their use. The Church still believes in the 'Communion of Saints;' and Paul told the Hebrew Christians that in learning to know and love their Saviour, they had in spirit 'come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven' (Heb. xii. 22, 23). The fact is a universal fact: the principle which it reveals is of universal application."

"I remember, Dokeos," I observed, "three charming verses of a hymn, written by one Charles Wesley, which finely illustrate what you have been saying:—

'Let all the saints terrestrial sing,  
With those to glory gone;  
For all the servants of our King,  
In heaven, on earth, are one.

'One family we dwell in Him:  
One church, above, beneath;  
Though now divided by the stream—  
The narrow stream of death.

'One army of the living God,  
At His command we bow;  
Part of His host hath crossed the flood,  
And part is crossing now!'"

"It deserves to be remembered, for its sentiments are true, and their expression is striking," replied Dokeos. "Every careful student of the Scriptures must, therefore, arrive at the conclusion that they do most certainly teach, firstly, by the way of illustrative examples, and secondly, by explicit declaration, the great fact of angelic guardian-

ship and ministration. There are, of course, differences between the particular cases named in the Word and common experience. One of these differences is, that all such manifestations had a purpose beyond the individual to whom such ministrations were appointed; they were given that the Word might be written as it is. Another is, the angels were rendered visible by the opening of the spiritual sight of those who saw them. A further difference is, that in some of the instances God, whom no man hath seen, neither can see, filled an angel with His presence, so that the angel spake as God in the place of God, and thus was a revelation of God to the beholder."

#### "THE ANGEL OF THE LORD."

"You remind me, Dokeos," I said, "of a generally accepted opinion,—that 'the Ange of the Lord,' such as 'redeemed' Jacob from all evil, and such as led the Israelites, of whom the Lord said, 'My name is in him,' and such also as Isaiah speaks of, 'In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them' (Isa. lxiii. 9), was none other than the pre-existent soul or spirit of Jesus. Is this so?"

Sophos replied to me. "If God be two and not one, if Jesus were the Son of God born from eternity, as personally distinct from the Father as the son of a human father is distinct from his human father, such a theory might be possibly true. But this supposition would involve the conclusion that there were and are two Gods, as distinct in person as a man and his son; and because the theory of necessity involves such a fatal conclusion, it cannot possibly be true. The Lord Jesus was the 'Everlasting Father,' or 'the Father of Eternity,' not *an Eternal Son*, manifested in the flesh. We read that no man 'hath seen



God at any time' (John i. 18) ; 'Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape' (John v. 37). Hence, in almost all those statements which appear as though God had rendered Himself personally visible, the personification is also described as 'the angel,' as in the case of the angel who appeared to Jacob, and wrestled with him. He is described as a man, yet he blessed Jacob as God, and Jacob called the place *Peni-el, the face of God*, because, as he said, 'I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved' (Gen. xxxii. 24-30). So also Manoah, after having twice seen 'the angel of Jehovah,' said, 'We shall surely die, because we have seen God' (Judg. xiii. 22). These, and other instances, show that these revelations of God were by means of an angel whom the Lord filled with His presence, overpowering and rendering inactive the individual consciousness of the angel, as that he could speak as God ; in other words, Jehovah put *His name in him*, and the angel thus became *the angel of His presence*. An instance of the same kind is recorded in the Apocalypse, where, within a few verses, we read that an *angel* appeared, who was made so glorious with the Divine presence as that John, despite his having been previously rebuked for a similar misapprehension (Rev. xix. 10), fell at his feet, and was about to worship him ; the angel reproved him, and told him, 'I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets ;' yet immediately afterwards he declared, 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last ;' and after, 'I Jesus have sent *Mine angel* to testify unto you these things in the churches' (Rev. xxii. 8, 9, 13, 16). He was an angel filled with the *presence* of the Lord, in whom was *the name* of the Lord, and who was thus empowered to representatively reveal the Lord, and to speak as the Lord in His name."

"Your explanation is exceedingly suggestive, Sophos," I rejoined, "and shall have careful consideration. But, Dokeos, if the appearances of angels recorded in the Scriptures differ so from the ordinary consociation of angels and men, what are the universal principles which underlie ordinary consociation?"

#### THE LAWS OF CONSOCIATION.

"Among many others, the following may well be specified," responded Dokeos :—

"I. Angels were once men on earth, and good men are potentially angels : there is therefore an affinity between them. Both internally are similar in kind, alike spiritual beings, however they may differ in the degree of love and wisdom into which they have entered.

"II. Man is, as to his spirit, already an inhabitant of the spiritual world, and is associated there with those who are in similar states of affection and thought. Yet the normal consciousness of both angels and men is in the ultimate plane in which each lives ; thus the normal consciousness of angels is in the spiritual, and that of man in the natural world.

"III. All the inhabitants of the spiritual world, whether in heaven, hell, or the world of spirits, are arranged, according to their *intellectual genius*, into what, for lack of a better word, we may term societies. Into one of these societies, every man enters at birth : his associates are those who are like himself in mental character, genius, aptitude, and individuality. None can pass out of his peculiar society, because no one could pass out of his own intellectual nature, and be some other person than himself. Each of these societies in the world of spirits is conjoined with a corresponding society in each heaven,

and associated with a partially corresponding society in hell ; so that there is a heavenly form of each society, a corresponding form of each in the World of Spirits, and also a partially corresponding form of each in hell. In this way is provided a line of *media* through which the Divine efflux of life and light and love may mediate flow, so as to reach every spirit in the World of Spirits, every man on earth, and even the infernals in hell.

“IV. While the *genius* of each man is fixed at birth, and therefore the society into which he enters is to him an unalterable fact, and one that he would never wish to alter, inasmuch as he can never desire to lose his intellectual individuality, or to be some other than himself, yet there is every scope for moral elevation and spiritual development ; for all the heavens are open upwards in each line of mediation ; there is likewise every possibility of perversion and degradation, for all the hells are open downwards in each line. The ultimate basis of the whole complex system is mankind on earth : the great centre of all the system is the Lord, who, as the Sun of Righteousness, a heavenly sun, shines over all. The great law of societary arrangement is similarity of *character* ; the law of consociation within that societary arrangement is similarity of *state*. Hence, without quitting the society to which each human spirit belongs, he may be consociated with angels, or with spirits, or even with devils ; he may ascend by regeneration into the highest heaven, or remain in a mixed condition of good and evil, or sink by continued perversions to the deepest hell. So again each man may come to occupy in the spiritual society into which he is born a relatively external, intermediate, or central position ; or he may come to be a connecting link between his society and another, or others. The fullest freedom of using or of

abusing, of developing or of perverting, his inborn faculties is the inheritance of each human soul, yet out of the hereditary intellectual limitations of his individuality he cannot step. Thus is reconciled in each case fate and freedom, liberty and destiny; and these are harmonious.

“V. There flows down this line of mediation to each soul an efflux from the Lord, which, because it passes through these intermediate angels and spirits, we designate *mediate*, and it continually acts upon the soul, in order to implant within it true thoughts and good affections; to excite into activity good affections previously implanted; and also to repress the activity of the hereditary evil affections which the infernals seek to excite and stimulate into action; and further, to lead the soul by the perception of truth to resist temptation, to strive against evil, and to put it away.

“VI. Besides this *mediate* efflux from the Lord through angels and spirits, there is an *immediate* influx of life from the Lord, flowing from the inmost degree or plane of man's nature, which is the dwelling-place of the Lord in each soul, down through interior planes, which are not yet opened to his consciousness, into the external plane of his rational and sentient mind, where consciousness has its seat. This immediate influx of life from the Lord is formless until it is received; and it is bounded, limited, and therefore *takes form* in the consciousness in which it terminates,—just as water flowing into a vessel assumes the form of the vessel; or just as wind blown into musical instruments takes the tone and character peculiar to each instrument. The mind is such a vessel, and the life of love, wisdom and power which man receives from the Divine Source of all life puts on the form of the character of the mind. Man, however, is not

God ; but all men live *from* God by an influx of life. Just as each plant imbibes so much heat and light from the sun, so much carbonic acid gas and moisture from the atmosphere, and so much of other materials from the soil, all of which it fixes in the form which is its own, while the plant is not heat, light, moisture, carbonic acid gas, or earthly matter ; so man receives from the sole source of life so much life as he can appropriate, and fixes it into the form or character which is his, and which truly is *himself*, while yet man is not life, but only a vessel which is recipient of life. Do you comprehend this ?”

“I think I do,” I answered, “and the explanation manifestly protects your proposition from the charge of Pantheism. The form is man : but life flows from the Lord into this form, and the life thus received assumes the form which receives, appropriates, and fixes it. This life so received is not Divine life, but life *from* the Divine Being.”

“This distinction is real and not verbal merely,” interposed Sophos. “To illustrate the point, you may think of this inflowing life as activity, proceeding from the Great First Force, or Sole Cause of Activity. It assumes distinctive forms according to the nature of the subject into which it enters and by which it is bounded or terminated : received into the lower forms of matter, it becomes gravitation, cohesion, chemical affinity and other ordinary qualities of matter : received into vegetable forms, it becomes vegetal life with all its powers and properties : received into animal forms, it becomes animal life with new faculties and qualities : received into man, it becomes human life, endowing the intellect, the will, the sentient soul, and even the body, with activity, which is its own particular gift. This activity in

the Divine is infinite love and wisdom ; when received by other forms it is so much love and wisdom as each of such recipient forms is capable of manifesting, or of typifying and representing as in a mirror. Hence all things in nature are more or less approximate types of man ; because, along with man, they all derive the life that is in them from God, and because man, more fully than any other created being, images or typifies God.

“ It is now known that heat, light, electricity, galvanism, are interchangeable correlatives, and that the simplest definition to which they all can be reduced is, that they are so many different modes or forms of motion : in a higher manner, all life is activity derived from the First Great Force, and the forms and modes of which vary according to the differences existing in the recipients. Hence, in the sense of embodying all the possibilities of life, God is, as the ancients described Him, ‘THE ALL ;’ in the sense of being the only embodiment of all the possibilities of life, God is also ‘THE ONE ;’ yet He has made creatures to exist which are not God, and these created forms are vivified by the influx of activity from Himself. If you think of all the created forms which ever did exist, or which now exist, or which will ever exist, you would not thereby think of God ; for He is apart from and above them, though He is the Fountain of life from which each receives his or its tiny stream of life. Nor is God ‘the *soul of the world*’ in any other than this figurative sense, —that, inasmuch as the body derives its life from the soul, so all created things derive their life from God. Life inflowing from God into man has no moral or intellectual quality or character : it is a living activity which terminates in man’s will and intellect, in his sentient and conscious soul, and thence descends into his body. This influent life becomes man’s own life when he has received

and appropriated it ; by appropriating it, each man gives to the life which he has thus received his own moral and intellectual character ; he stamps upon it his own image and superscription, and therefore it is man's own. His mental and moral form becomes more and more fixed by habit and voluntary choice, and so life as it is received and appropriated by him becomes more markedly characteristic, and more manifestly his own."

"These ideas are full of suggestion, Sophos," I said, when he paused ; "they demand much thought, however, and which I promise to give to them. Now, Dokeos, pray proceed to explain how the second line of efflux from the Lord, which you style *mediate*, operates, and to what end."

"I distinguish between these two forms of efflux," resumed Dokeos, "by designating that which is immediately received from the Lord the *influx of life* ; and by styling that which proceeds mediately through angels and spirits *afflux*—an activity which flows *to* the living form and acts upon it, not from within the inmost ground of man's being, but relatively from without. Deprived of continual *influx* of life immediately from God, or were it for an instant suspended, man would cease to exist. He is not a machine, once set going and maintained in motion by any adjustment of forces, or by any reserve of force stored up within him : he continues to live by a continual inflowing of life. But man is a complex, many-sided being, having within his spiritual nature a multitude of faculties and various interior planes in which affections may have their seat, thence to flow down into the rational plane in which he is conscious. Mediate afflux acts upon these various inner planes or degrees which belong to man as a spiritual being, stimulating them into activity, and by thus inducing within them a power of reaction

against the downflowing activity from the Lord, helping in their development. (Pardon my using terms which at present cannot communicate any clear idea to your mind, but which will shortly be explained.) In this way *celestial* angels act upon the celestial plane in man; *spiritual* angels operate on the spiritual plane in man; angels of the kingdom of *obedience* operate upon the plane which corresponds to their spiritual condition; and good spirits operate upon the ordinary rational plane. All these seek to excite good affections, which become thoughts, in man's mind; further, to fix in man's very constitution as a spiritual being the states of pure love and true thoughts through which he has passed, and likewise to bring into activity all the good affections and truths which may have previously been implanted. The object at which they aim is, that man may thus be led in freedom to the continual voluntary re-adoption of such good affections, and thus to confirm and establish them in his character, to form which is his life's great work. Do you still follow me?"

"I think I know what you mean," I replied, "though, of course, I make nothing clear to myself of some of your distinctions, such as the classes of angels, and the planes of the human mind."

"These I shall endeavour to make plain to you when we speak of the distinctions existing among the angels," rejoined Dokeos. "For the moment, permit me to continue. No man is isolated from his kind. All are involved in a vast network of inter-action. In the world man acts upon men in a thousand ways: in the spiritual world this inter-action does not cease, but it becomes more interior and more complicated. Feelings and affections flow in upon the souls of all men, suggesting appropriate thoughts, which are thus presented in order that man may appropriate them by the exercise of his own



will. Neither thoughts nor feelings are, strictly speaking, a man's own until he has consented to the feeling, and has adopted the thought. By the repetitions of such consentings, and of such adoptions, however, each man forms in himself a definite moral and intellectual character ; he assumes his own proper and special place in the society to which his spirit belongs ; he renders more definite and more operative the kinds of afflux to which he yields himself most willingly the subject ; his consociations with particular angels or spirits or devils becomes increasingly closer and more congenial ; he either rejoices in his emancipation from evil or he rivets his chains, and thus he becomes gradually fitted either for heaven or for hell. So long as he lives in the natural world, a man is kept in equilibrium between the opposing afflux of good and evil spirits, so that he may choose in freedom to which side he will incline. When he enters into the spiritual world, the equilibrium ceases ; for then, becoming conscious in the spiritual plane of his nature, he voluntarily chooses his associates, his place of abode, and the indulgence of his ruling love.

“ Men act on each other by the outward expression of thoughts and feelings ; these produce impressions in the mind, both distinct and vague ; the impressions become generalized into convictions, or are appropriated by the will as motives, and thus influence conduct. The impressions remain long after the circumstances which give rise to them cease to be remembered ; the convictions remain long after the particular impressions which they generalized are forgotten ; the motives remain as prejudices and habits of will when the convictions which the will thus first selected and approved have gone beyond the power of recall. If men can so act upon each other, when that action must in the first instance be consciously received

from without, how much more potently can spirits act upon men! They operate directly into the will, and by awakening former affections, revive trains of recollection, or suggest new developments of an old fancy; thus mingling the old and new so as often to render it a matter of debate to the man himself whether he does not positively remember something that he sees or imagines for the first time. While angels and spirits thus re-awaken former emotions, recall previous states, and lead the consciousness into new conditions of feeling, and thence of thought, it appears to the man as though the feelings and thoughts were altogether his own, the free activity of his own soul. This appearance of living, willing, and thinking of and from himself is necessary to man, in order that he may be an image and likeness of God, who absolutely lives in and from Himself. In man's case, however, it is only an appearance, for he lives from God, and by far the larger proportion of his states of affection, and consequent thoughts, are excited by the angels, spirits, and devils who are with him."

"But," I observed, "does not this theory play havoc with man's responsibility? How can he be accountable for an operation of which he is only the subject, and over which he has no control?"

"Man is not accountable for the thoughts that flash across his mind, nor for the feelings which start up in his consciousness," rejoined Dokeos. "Even the purest will sometimes have a thought injected into his mind, from which he recoils; even the best will become conscious of an emotion which will fill him with pain. He is accountable for the thoughts which he voluntarily harbours, for the feelings that he cherishes; but his accountability is then, not for the entrance into his mind of the thought or emotion, but for his harbouring, choosing, and cherish-

ing them. The mind is like an inn, or an exchange, or other place of public resort : a hundred vagrant wayfarers may enter in and pass through it, those which are invited home, or are made friends and companions of, really act upon the character, and so render the man responsible."

"What part, then, of his mental or voluntary operations lie peculiarly within man's individual province, and which are, consequently, actually his own?" I asked.

"The mental appropriation of the suggested thought, the voluntary adoption of the excited feeling—these are the results of the man's individual choice," said Dokeos. "We can choose only from what is presented : the presentation, therefore, affords an opportunity of making choice. As each chooses, he forms his character ; and as his character becomes defined, he, too, in his turn, becomes a medium from whom afflux proceeds to operate on others. To a certain extent, each man in the natural world exerts such an influence over others ; he thus prepares himself to exert a still greater influence when he enters into the spiritual world ; because *then*, he can operate directly into the will, without the necessity of his voice being heard, or his writings being read, or of his ideas being first received into the memory."

"The presentation of what is bad, then, is a temptation," I remarked, "and the presentation of what is good is an opportunity for spiritual progress. Now, are there any special duties devolving upon particular angels attendant on man at any peculiar periods of man's existence?"

#### SPECIAL USES AND CONSOCIATIONS.

"Yes," replied Sophos. "Inasmuch as all consociation is according to state, and the states of all men are different at different periods, consociation at such different

periods must needs differ. Man passes through the state of infancy, childhood, youth, young manhood, maturity, old age : his spiritual condition during these periods of necessity varies ; so also his consociation with angels and spirits correspondingly varies. During infancy each human being is the charge of the highest, holiest, and therefore the wisest of the angels in the society into which the infant soul has entered. We designate these *celestial* angels. Hence the Saviour said of all children, that 'in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven' (Matt. xviii. 10). Their most congenial duty it is to implant in the tender child every gentle affection and every true thought which may visit its dawning mind. Something of these thoughts and affections *remain* with the child, notwithstanding that he may not remember them, and we term such *Celestial Remains*. From birth to about the tenth year these celestial angels continue with the child, laying in, in the innocence of its young soul, the deep foundation of its future heavenly character.

"But about this period there takes place a change in the state of the child : the time of intellectual activity increasingly predominates, and another class of angels minister to him ; these we designate *spiritual* angels, who belong to the Lord's kingdom of *wisdom*, as the celestial angels especially belong to the Lord's kingdom of *love*. These strive to develop in the child his rational faculties, implanting therein the love of knowing and also confidence in his teachers. Something of these states remain with him, and we designate them *Spiritual Remains*.

"The child becomes a youth, and another class of angels attend him who are adapted to his changed condition ; these angels are of the Lord's kingdom of *obedience*, and they strive to foster in the youth's soul the desire to live out, to reduce into practice the truths that he learns.

"His state still farther changes; he develops into the accountability of manhood; he has to encounter a man's temptations, and do a man's work in a world of work; loosed from the supervision and superintendence of parents, guardians and teachers, he must now exercise his power of free determination, and decide for himself among the problems of practical experience. Yet he is not forsaken by helpers. Good spirits are about him, striving to lead him successively into the voluntary re-adoption of the 'remains' of obedience, or of loyalty to truth, or of innocence, which have been stored up within his soul. Evil spirits are likewise with him, seeking to excite into activity his hereditary predispositions to evil, by imparting bad and base affections, to suggest corresponding ideas, and thus to make him their slave. According as he decides, he allies himself with angels or devils, renders his soul more accessible to good or to bad influences, and sways the balance to the right or to the left.

"Through all his subsequent changes of state, the man is still accompanied by good and bad spirits and angels. If he resists the evil and adopts the good, angels and good spirits enter into still closer association with him, and evil spirits retire from him: the contrary takes place, if he adopts the evil and rejects the good. A blessed old age is attained when, having nobly fought his good fight of faith, the man has re-entered into the innocence of his early states, made now to be the innocence of *wisdom*, as that of his childhood was the innocence of *ignorance*; when he has again come into consociation with the purest and wisest of the Kingdom of God, and, his earthly work almost accomplished, he calmly yet hopefully waits to hear the welcome, 'Friend, come up higher!' Through his pilgrimage of regeneration he has, as a man,

had to retrace the line down which his childhood and youth had passed ; he successively has entered into the delight of obedience, thence into the love of the truth for its own sake, and thence into the love of goodness, which is the love of God. Such angels as are in similar states are successively consociated with him, and many a foretaste of their heavenly joys have been accorded to him. He is spiritually climbing the ladder which Jacob saw, and approaching nearer and still nearer to the Lord."

"The speculation is beautiful," I exclaimed.

"To you it may seem a pleasing speculation, my friend," rejoined Sophos. "To us it is the certainty of knowledge, whose beauty does but confirm its truth."

"Properly regarded, then," added Dokeos, "every action of man's life is a drama, rising into heroism, or deepening into tragedy, according as he triumphs over evil, or becomes its victim. He deems himself to be alone ; but he is not alone. Angels are the spectators of the struggle, contending spirits are the combatants, with man rests the power of deciding the conflict, and his decision means spiritual life or spiritual death to the specific principle or affection involved in the struggle."

"If all this be true," I exclaimed, "human life is wondrously solemn, and human conduct a marvellously important thing !"

"When we think of all the precursory affections and thoughts which were needed before any particular affection or thought was rendered possible ; and when we think of all the unending consequences of every state of affection and thought, and remember all the varieties of spiritual forces between which each affection or thought adjusts the balance, we must conclude that no decision of man's will is trivial, and no human action is unimportant," responded Sophos. "The smallest pebble cast into

a lake occasions a movement of the water which produces ever-widening circles, till they beat themselves to rest in ripples against the shore : human existence, however, is not bounded by time ; as to the future, it is a sea without a shore ; the circles produced therein by any decision or by any action go widening out for ever. These affections and thoughts become fixed in the character of him who adopts them : they permanently enrich or impoverish the man."

#### THE INTELLECTUAL SIDE OF CONSOCIATION.

"All that you have yet said relates to the moral side of human character, to good and evil as presented to man and appropriated by him ; what of the intellectual side ?" I asked. "If it be true that afflux thus continually operates, how can we say of any one that he is an original mind, a creator ? Is there no possibility of a genius arising who shall utter thoughts no other has ever possessed or expressed, or who shall embody ideas into institutions or inventions which will be perfectly novel ?"

"In one sense," answered Dokeos, "no man is original ; for the origin of all true thoughts is God, and all false thoughts are but limitations, and perversions of the truth. In another sense, every man is original ; for the thoughts of no two men are precisely alike. The kind of afflux of which each is the subject, his capacity and method of receiving it, the executive ability by which he embodies it in outward visibleness, and the manner in which his individual work is done,—all these differ in each man, and thus produce the diversities of things which you see. There is, therefore, no finality in regard to human progress. Far greater mechanical, engineering, agricultural, scientific, artistic, literary and institutional triumphs await

mankind than any which have yet been compassed. Men will be born more accessible and open to afflux, not only from one section of a spiritual society but from all of the society, or even from a combination of such societies, and the results will be proportionately remarkable. Hence men will arise who, in the ordinary sense of the term, will be more *original* than ever ; and yet, whose originality will really consist in their openness to the inflowing of ideas from the spiritual world, and in their intrinsic ability to co-operate therewith."

"You speak of societies in the spiritual world and their conjoint operation, and not of individual angels or spirits—why is this ?" I asked.

"The unit of production even in the natural world is not the individual, but a whole series of persons whose combined labours have evolved any result," replied Dokoes. "Think of the simplest operation, such, for example, as the writing of a book. The planting and gathering of the fibre whence the paper is made, its collection and transportation, its manufacture and distribution ; and all the mining, smelting, casting, finishing and distribution of the tools employed in the process of the manufacture of paper ; and the previous labours of all those who prepared the tools with which the miners, smelters and tool-makers worked ; the process of labour of which the pens you use, or the ink which you employ, are the result ; all the labours of the writers and printers to whose works you refer ; all the labours of your previous teachers ; all the persons and things which have acted upon you in the development of your mental powers—all these, and a thousand others, involved in the production of the table on which your paper is laid, the chair on which you sit, the room and house which you occupy, the social and political conditions which render it possible



for you to write, have to be taken into the account, as tending directly and indirectly to the writing of your book. How much more complex does the arrangement appear, if you think of the erection of a cathedral, the building of a steamship, the construction and working of a railway, the establishment of a new commerce, or the creation of a new industry. Society is a great complex of societies. Even without preconcert, vast series of workmen co-operate in producing each final result. The instant the principle of a division of labour is at all adopted, centres are established for distinct industrial societies. Each labourer's work is a spiral touching many others, and communicating with, and acting on all. In the natural world such inter-relations are confused, and we often fail to distinguish them: in the spiritual world society is not less complex as to uses, but the choice of his use is the natural determination of each man to the duty he most delights in, and which he can, therefore, perform with the greatest dexterity and success. Hence associations there are the inevitable combinations of specific genius, combining, also, according to the simplest law. The inter-relations and inter-actions of societies in the spiritual world are also more easily discerned.

"Isolation is sterility! To all human production more than one thing is necessary. In the spiritual world isolation is impossible. The most perfect illustration of organization which natural life furnishes is the human body, with its extreme diversity of parts and functions. Every minutest portion of the body performs its allotted use, and contributes its definite quatum to the complete operation of the whole. So, correspondingly, every human unit in the spiritual world fills his appointed place, and performs his chosen function in the great economy of use which is there established. Each co-

operates and all the societies co-act. Each individual receives in happiness, delight, peace, and in the reception of the Divine Love and Wisdom, his abundant reward ; which is continually sufficient for each, because the capacity of receiving and containing, which each possesses, is continually full. Such, again, as is the use of the spiritual society, such also is the character of the afflux from it into the minds of the workers on earth ; and such as is the use which the earthly worker most delights in performing, such is the afflux which he most fully receives."

"Then there must be arts and sciences in heaven !" I exclaimed.

"Beyond all question there are, and must be," rejoined Dokeos ; "but the arts and sciences of heaven are heavenly, not earthly. They make one with earthly arts and sciences, not because they are earthly arts and sciences transplanted from earth into heaven, but by *correspondence*. We shall have more to say on this topic presently, when we converse as to what angels do in heaven. Suffice it now to declare that the inventions, discoveries, and institutions which the world witnesses are not solely or exclusively of human fabrication : the desire and disposition, and thence ideas, flow in upon men, who, by co-operating therewith, work out into visible ultimatum the things they have received. There is no inventor or discoverer who will not admit that the idea '*came to him*' which afterwards he developed and fixed. '*It came*'—whence, and from whom ? The fact is, that the agriculturists, mechanics, commercial men, teachers, preachers, writers, artists, poets, men of science, jurists, legislators, and rulers of the world, are all connected with societies who are in the love of *corresponding uses* in the spiritual world, and these are connected with

the Lord, the final Author and Giver of all wisdom. Each man receives afflux according to his peculiar genius, and whatever he produces is the combined result, the ultimate embodiment, of all that he has received, and of his individual co-action therewith."

"But does not this startling consequence follow—that in proportion as human society becomes more perfect, the conditions of the spiritual world become more perfect?" I asked.

"It does follow, and it is true," replied Dokeos. "Have you any objection?"

"It makes the higher dependent on the lower," I hazarded.

Sophos answered me. "If there is such an inter-relation between the whole of the intelligent creatures whom God has made as we can discern that there must be, does it not follow that an adverse state of men prevents angels having the joy which they experience in perceiving the penitence of a sinner; and that, therefore, in proportion as the Church becomes established on earth, the joy of the angels becomes more full and perfect? Do you not see that, on earth, the perfection of society, regarded as a whole, is dependent on the relative condition of the lowest classes? Do you not see also that the mental and moral perfection of society is likewise dependent on the social, and even the physical condition of the people? What means the maxim of one of your wise men, 'A sound mind in a sound body,' if it be not a recognition of the truth, that the well-being of the higher, the spiritual world in the individual man, is dependent on the well-being of the lower, the physical or natural world in the individual man? What is true of man as an individual is also true of man collectively, or as society; because mankind is but the aggregate of all

men. We show you a wider view of the human family ; for in the sight of the Lord, and as viewed by instructed intelligence, all the rational and free beings whom the Lord has made in His image and likeness, whether they be angels, or spirits, or men, form one great and inter-related family !”

“It is a large, a comprehensive thought, Sophos,” I answered ; “but like several others you have uttered, it burdens the mind, and demands serious meditation.”

“Before we quit this topic, ‘What do the angels do for man?’” said Sophos, “it will be well to specially notice that the consociation of man with societies of spirits and angels does not in any way interfere with his freedom of will, or with his liberty in intellectual development. Good and bad spirits present to the man good and evil affections : they thus present opportunities of choice, and the choice which he makes is the exercise of his moral freedom. According as he chooses, he confirms the moral operation of either class of these his consociates.

“The fullest latitude of intellectual development likewise is furnished to every man. Each has all the faculties which belong to all, though in diverse conditions of relative proportion. Every faculty is capable of development ; though the development of each mind will be easiest along the line of some special group of faculties. This facility of development in regard to some faculties indicates the intellectual character of each, and the spiritual society to which each belongs. Yet the development of all the faculties in wisdom and knowledge will for ever continue. Each will continue to be a ‘Specialist’ in the sense of having special powers, and thence functions ; but the specialty will not arise from any starving of the other faculties of the human soul. It will not be a specialty of deformity ; the general develop-

ment will proceed uniformly with the development of the special capacity; so that the man will for ever grow at once more markedly characteristic, and also more finely attuned and balanced, as he gains a more enduring and a more comprehensive insight into the infinite wisdom of the Eternal."

"Thanks, Sophos," I said. "Let us come to the next topic."

## § II. WHAT DO THE ANGELS DO FOR SPIRITS IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS?

"It is," replied Dokeos, "What do the angels do for spirits in the World of Spirits? When a man's lungs cease to respire, he is said to be dead. Yet the links that unite the spirit and the body are not then immediately sundered. Hence some have been raised from the dead, as described in the Word; others have reawakened to physical life, notwithstanding the fact that their bodies ceased perceptibly to breathe. You have surely heard of such cases?"

"I have," I answered, "and some of them have been very terrible, such as the moving of a supposed corpse in the coffin, and the interment of persons before they were really dead. Some such cases are also extremely interesting, from the narrations of what such persons have seen and heard, during the period between what their friends deemed their decease and their reviving."

"Some of these narratives are undoubtedly true," added Dokeos. "The length of time which elapses between the seeming decease of any one and the complete disruption of all the connecting links which unite the soul and body, differs in each according to the state of the body, the nature of the disease, and the manner of

death. In some the collapse is almost immediate; in others it is gradual and even slow, indicated in the continuation of a slight motion of the heart, the retention of animal heat, colour in the face, and flexibility in the joints. In all cases, the indrawal of the soul from the body is a process; and over this process the highest and holiest of angels preside. The child's prayer for angels to guard its slumbers is ever heard and granted; and, in like manner, over the slumber of death angels keep watch and ward."

"We can be still more particular," added Sophos. "The inmost communication between the spirit and the body exists in the systolic motion of the heart. When this motion entirely ceases, on which all the vital movements of the body depend, the separation of the spirit from the body takes place. This may be almost immediately, as on a battle-field, or it may be a day, or even two days after death. The spirit sinks as into a deep sleep: it is what has given rise to the notion of 'death's long sleep;' though, in reality, it is the *short sleep of death*. Yet the spirit is not then alone. Angels of the *celestial* kingdom are around him, and their presence drives away all evil spirits. Every one is thus guarded from evil spirits at his first awaking into the spiritual world. The process of awaking begins, and the spirit gradually becomes aroused. He is first conscious of the state of feeling and thought in which he was immediately prior to the decease of his body, and which usually regards eternal life. The angels seek to retain him in this state. He sees the angels, who inform him that he is a spirit in the world of spirits, and who fain would lead him to their heaven. He remains with these so long as his state is at all similar to theirs; if the similarity is internal and complete, he abides with them for ever. He separates him-

self from them so soon as he feels that his affections and desires are contrary to theirs. Then is repeated the wonderful sequence of angelic operation, of which, as an infant, a child, a youth, he had previously been the subject. He passes into the company of *spiritual* angels, who fain would claim him as their brother; and with these he continues so long as he can have fellowship with them. Departing from both the angels of the Lord's kingdom of *love*, and the Lord's kingdom of *wisdom*, he enters into temporary association with angels of the Lord's kingdom of *obedience*, and with these he abides so long as he can share their joys, because of his having made his own the 'Remains' which they had formerly implanted. If the newly resuscitated spirit has by regeneration, and by the voluntary readoption of the 'Remains' which they implanted, made the state of either of these classes of angels to be his own state of love, their eternal home is his, and they joyfully guide him to the abodes of the blessed, described in the parable as 'Abraham's bosom.' If he has not thus entered into heavenly love, or if his state be a mixed state, he cannot long bear the presence of the angels, and he departs from them. He is then adjoined to good spirits, and remains with them so long as his affection is congenial with theirs. But the inevitable law in every case is, that the newly resuscitated spirit must seek for those who are in a similar state of affection with himself, and, when they are found, he must abide with them. Unlikeness produces constraint; and so entire is the freedom of spirits in the spiritual world, that they descend without hindrance along the line of spiritual helpers till they feel fully at liberty, because among their *like*. If they go to hell, their hell is self-chosen, just as the infernal affection which, in the natural world, fitted them for their hell, was chosen by themselves. In thus

welcoming the new-comers into the spiritual world, and in striving to draw out whatever of good was in them, and thus to lead them to heaven, can be discerned a great group of duties and uses devolving upon the angels in the World of Spirits."

"Where, then, is the judgment which is passed upon every man after death? And what is the nature of that judgment?" I asked.

#### THE PROCESS OF JUDGMENT.

"The description given in the Word of the great white throne, and of the Lord sitting upon it coming to judge the spirits of men, is symbolry and not science," replied Sophos. "The symbols are taken from the tribunals of human judgment, and they were employed to cause the idea to fall within the lines of ordinary human experience. The Lord is truly the Judge; the *great throne* is the symbol of His sovereign authority as the King of kings and Lord of lords; its *whiteness* is the symbol of the clear-shining of His Divine Truth, by which He tries and reveals the states of men. The real process of judgment is an inward and spiritual process, and one which differs in its character as it is undergone by each individual man. The agents in the process are angels who are Examiners or Explorers of the life of each human being.

"For the sake of illustration, we may group all the souls of men into four great classes,—*first*, those who are in truly heavenly states of love and perception, who have fought the good fight of faith in the natural world, and who waited with joy the death-summons or the coming to them of the Lord; *secondly*, those who are in a mixed state, but whose ruling affection is good, whose minds are beclouded with falsities, and whose life has been full



of infirmity, who come up to heaven through much tribulation, and need to pass through the process of vastation, in order to purge away their dross; *thirdly*, those who are also in a mixed state, but whose ruling love is evil, whose understandings, however, are full of truths, hypocrisies, feigned sanctity, and a self-delusion of righteousness; who need to be deprived of all their counterfeits and cloaks, that they may stand revealed in their own spiritual deformity to themselves and to others; and *lastly*, those whose loves and whose lives have been utterly evil, who have vitiated their souls by iniquity, whose hands reek with crimes, who have been confirmed adulterers, drunkards, thieves, and murderers; who have been open, flagrant, truth-defying devils while on earth, and who are ready at once to rush down to perdition. The process of judgment on each of these classes, though similar in general principles, necessarily differs in many details. The first step of the general process is **EXPLORATION**, the second is **VASTATION**, the third is the entrance of the spirit into his **FINAL ABODE**. I shall speak of these three steps successively.

“*First*, the heavenly, who were angels on earth. When they meet with their like in the World of Spirits, they are filled with peace and joy. They accompany their angelic guides and guardians to their eternal habitations. There is no need of a further descent, for their state has already been *explored*. There is no need of *vastation*, the separation of the false from the good, or the truth from the wicked; for this process has been effected on earth. They, like Lazarus in the parable, are at once ‘carried by angels into Abraham’s bosom.’ They are fitted to be with the Lord where He is, they inhabit one of the many ‘mansions’ in the ‘Father’s house’ prepared for them. They pass at once to their *final abode*. Unhappily, in

the present times, the number of such is not great; but in this way the judgment on such is completed."

"But their sins!" I observed. "Who is without sin?"

"The heavens themselves are not absolutely pure in the sight of God," replied Sophos. "But the Word itself most mercifully teaches us on this point. Behold!"

I heard music, which began in a gentle, solemn strain, full of mourning and sadness, which then gradually changed its character into a glorious burst of harmony, suggestive of joy, exultation, and triumph. As I gazed, the atmosphere seemed to grow dense, and in letters of silvery whiteness, glittering as with the sheen of pearls, I read these glorious words:—

IF THE WICKED WILL TURN FROM ALL HIS SINS THAT HE HATH COMMITTED, AND KEEP ALL MY STATUTES, AND DO THAT WHICH IS LAWFUL AND RIGHT, HE SHALL SURELY LIVE, HE SHALL NOT DIE. ALL HIS TRANSGRESSIONS THAT HE HATH COMMITTED THEY SHALL NOT BE MENTIONED UNTO HIM: IN HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT HE HATH DONE SHALL HE LIVE.\*

IN THOSE DAYS, AND AT THAT TIME, SAITH THE LORD, THE INIQUITY OF ISRAEL SHALL BE SOUGHT FOR, AND THERE SHALL BE NONE; AND THE SINS OF JUDAH, AND THEY SHALL NOT BE FOUND: FOR I WILL PARDON THEM WHOM I RESERVE.†

I, EVEN I, AM HE THAT BLOTTETH OUT THY TRANSGRESSIONS FOR MINE OWN SAKE, AND WILL NOT REMEMBER THY SINS.‡

WASH YOU, MAKE YOU CLEAN; PUT AWAY THE EVIL OF YOUR DOINGS FROM BEFORE MINE EYES; CEASE TO DO EVIL, LEARN TO DO WELL, SEEK JUDGMENT, RELIEVE THE OPPRESSED, JUDGE THE FATHERLESS, PLEAD FOR THE

\* Ezek. xviii. 21, 22.

† Jer. l. 20.

‡ Isa. xliii. 25.

WIDOW. COME NOW, AND LET US REASON TOGETHER, SAITH THE LORD; THOUGH YOUR SINS BE AS SCARLET, THEY SHALL BE AS WHITE AS SNOW; THOUGH THEY BE RED LIKE CRIMSON, THEY SHALL BE AS WOOL.\*

BLESSED IS HE WHOSE TRANSGRESSION IS FORGIVEN, WHOSE SIN IS COVERED. BLESSED IS THE MAN UNTO WHOM THE LORD IMPUTETH NOT INIQUITY, AND IN WHOSE SPIRIT THERE IS NO GUILF.†

"Great is the loving-kindness of the Lord, who is abundant in all mercy, my friend," said Sophos.

I could not speak. Those words of grace and forgiveness, those pledges of pardon, overcame me. I felt that what Sophos had said concerning the judgment of the sanctified must be true.

Sophos resumed: "The *second* class consists of those in a mixed state, whose ruling love is good, but who are encumbered with falsities of faith and infirmities of character. These remain with the angels longer or shorter periods according as their state of goodness is more or less interior. As they descend from stage to stage, the process of *exploration* is continually going on. Their real character and life become increasingly manifest to themselves, and to the angels and good spirits who are near them. Not all at once can they unlearn their false notions and learn the truth. Not all at once can they overcome and root out the hereditary infirmities of their natures. They have to retrace the steps of their life-history; experiences of temptation and trial are brought to bear on them, to see whether they will, in their then state of freedom, interiorly hate, abjure, and put away the evil infirmity. This process of putting off falsity, of putting away infirmity, of suppressing and subjecting in them-

\* Isa. i. 16-18.

† Psa. xxxii. 1, 2.

selves whatever there is which is not in harmony with their ruling affection, is called *vastation*. It differs in mode, interiorness, and severity, according to the state of each. The sufferings which many undergo in this process are often prolonged, varied, and terrible. It is a painful thing to wrench out of human souls loves which are often deeply seated, though not in harmony with the good ruling affection. All the sufferings of the earthly life are designed by the Lord to be *vastatory*—to harmonize the character of the soul into the order of heaven. The vastations of earth are much less severe than those of the World of Spirits. The love of money, the love of praise, the love of power, the vice of drunkenness, delight in ease, or in mere external pleasure, irritability of temper, self-indulgence, and such vices, bring upon the souls which have yielded to them, even while trying to resist them, intense anguish. Interior conflicts are, in the spiritual world, ultimated into corresponding appearances, so that they in whom such struggles take place, between the ruling affection and its desires and these inharmonious loves and their desires, appear to themselves to be in outward conflicts, outward privations, and outward bondage. The inward sufferings of their minds flow down into the very substances of their spiritual bodies, filling them with strange pains and terrible sensations. They are troubled by conscience, remorse lays hold on them, the fear of hell strives with the hope of heaven, and they groan to be delivered. Their penitence is full of sorrow. They have seasons of peace until they fall again, but again to rise. They are not left alone. Angels and good spirits continually help and comfort them, infuse hope into them, teach them the truths of eternal life, and strive in every way to lead them to light and victory. They gradually tend upwards, the infernals cease to claim, infest,

and trouble them; and then, when at length they enter into a state that is homogeneous and self-consistent, they pass with joy and gratitude to their own place in heaven. They are among those who have 'come up through great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' Their capacity of receiving heavenly joy is not so great as that of those who needed not this process, but it is full."

"But is not this purgatory?"

"It is not surprising if there be a slight similarity between the truth and the perversion of the truth," responded Sophos. "Priestcraft corrupted the truth by attaching to it the mummary of saying masses and of praying for the dead. No prayers can help them or affect them. They have to fight out the conflict till their real state is rendered homogeneous, and then they pass to their final abode. Even the early Christian Church overlaid the truth with a vain superstition, which however did not endure long, but to which Paul refers—it was *being baptized for the dead* (1 Cor. xv. 29). We need not now renew our former discussion on these points. The Word affirms the punishment, its comparative severity in some instances and lightness in other cases. The law under which it is inflicted is altogether merciful, for it is the only possible means by which those who are not inwardly evil may become freed from the consequences of their infirmities and their fallacies. Behold!"

Like a solemn march, distinctly marked and slow, the sounds of music came to me, and I saw upon the atmosphere in crimson lines the words:—

THAT SERVANT WHICH KNEW HIS LORD'S WILL AND PREPARED NOT HIMSELF, NEITHER DID ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, SHALL BE BEATEN WITH MANY STRIPES. BUT

HE THAT KNEW NOT, AND DID COMMIT THINGS WORTHY OF STRIPES, SHALL BE BEATEN WITH FEW.\*

AGREE WITH THINE ADVERSARY QUICKLY WHILE THOU ART IN THE WAY WITH HIM, LEST AT ANY TIME THE ADVERSARY DELIVER THEE TO THE JUDGE, AND THE JUDGE DELIVER THEE TO THE OFFICER, AND THOU BE CAST INTO PRISON. VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, THOU SHALT BY NO MEANS COME OUT THENCE TILL THOU HAST PAID THE UTTERMOST FARTHING.†

"The 'few stripes,' the 'uttermost farthing,' which is to be paid, refer to this process of vastation," said Sophos.

"What sins then cannot be forgiven?" I demanded.

"Behold!" exclaimed Sophos.

Like the rising and falling of a storm, music burst out, now wild and wailing, and then gentle, peaceful, and tender, and in golden glory the words flamed out upon the air:—

ALL MANNER OF SIN AND BLASPHEMY SHALL BE FORGIVEN UNTO MEN; BUT THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN UNTO MEN. AND WHOSOEVER SPEAKETH A WORD AGAINST THE SON OF MAN, IT SHALL BE FORGIVEN HIM; BUT WHOSOEVER SPEAKETH AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST, IT SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN HIM, NEITHER IN THIS WORLD, NEITHER IN THE WORLD TO COME.‡

"The sins which can be forgiven, either in this life or the life after death," said Sophos, "are sins against the Divine Truth as known and understood—the Son of

\* Luke xii. 47, 48.

† Matt. v. 25, 26.

‡ Matt. xii. 31, 32.

Man; if, in the commission of such sins, the sinner has not inwardly corrupted and profaned all the impulses to goodness, all conscience, and all desires of reformation, with which the Holy Spirit of God has inspired his heart. The process is terrible, the 'uttermost farthing' must be paid. Only those, however, are finally lost who inwardly love evil and delight in it—who voluntarily, deliberately, and knowingly choose evil as their good, and hell as their heaven. They feel no compunction, know no remorse: on earth they were devils incarnate; in the other world they are devils disrobed of flesh."

"Is not this dangerous doctrine to teach to sinners?" I asked.

"What?" demanded Sophos. "Is it dangerous to teach that 'God's mercy endureth for ever?' To teach that He willeth not the death of any sinner, and never can will it? To teach that eternity as well as time must furnish to Him opportunities for showing loving-kindness, and that those who are finally lost are lost despite all His will, and despite all the operations of His love? Let us justify God and vindicate His providence, the result will prove that He is wise and right!

"The *third* class," continued Sophos, "consists of those whose ruling love is evil, who, however, possess some knowledge of truth, some emotions of piety, some appearances of virtue, who veil their vices with hypocrisy, and who have been restrained from open iniquity by a selfish fear of loss. They, too, descend through the files of angels, with greater or less rapidity, according as their hypocrisy is more or less interior. They come down into the society of good spirits, and affect to be good, while inwardly they desire to be far away from such good spirits, that they may secretly commit their darling sins. The inward desire grows more and more powerful in pro-

portion as they find they can gain nothing by their hypocrisies, and perceive that their real state is discerned and understood. Angels *explore* their state, and beneath the light of truth they shrink, and are forced both to reveal and to perceive their real character. All their transgressions are written in their internal memory, their 'Book of Life,' down to the minutest particular of time, circumstances, motives, and place. They can hide nothing from those who explore their state, nor from themselves. They re-enact the old scenes, burn with the old passions, revel in the old abominations, shudder again at the old dangers, and contrive the old hypocrisies, but this time in the open light of day. They cannot escape from themselves. They insensibly grow externally to be the very images of the lust which rules within them, in which they delight, and the gratifications of which they begin more and more openly to desire and seek. Greed grasps, clutches, and hoards; tyranny strives to enslave; drunkenness endeavours to join in mad orgies; blasphemy howls profanity; lust leers, craves, and fain would sin; cruelty invents tortures; hatred whets imaginary daggers, and seeks to slay; envy grows green-eyed, lank, and blotched; priestcraft fancies itself a lord over the souls of man, and would fain be a god; every sin puts on the fantasy corresponding to itself, and the moral insanity of each begins to make for itself a hell. All desires of concealment are thrown off, one by one: the inwardly wicked grow to glory in their old iniquities, and which they burn to repeat. Evil though their delights are, they yearn for their delight, and seek such society as appears to promise to yield them what they crave. The Divine Word teaches us this truth. Behold!"

With music, mournful, wailing, terrible, just as though a chorus of angels had sobbed, I saw blaze out on the



thickening atmosphere, in gloomy, reddish purple lines, the words :—

THERE IS NOTHING COVERED THAT SHALL NOT BE REVEALED ; NEITHER HID THAT SHALL NOT BE KNOWN. WHATSOEVER YE HAVE SPOKEN IN DARKNESS SHALL BE HEARD IN THE LIGHT ; AND THAT WHICH YE HAVE SPOKEN IN THE EAR IN CLOSETS SHALL BE PROCLAIMED ON THE HOUSETOPS.\*

“As this process of *exploration* continues,” resumed Sophos, “the second process of *vastation* also proceeds. Gradually the spirit forgets the truths which condemned the evils he loves. The love was an internal principle ; the truth was only an external thought of the memory. The external memory becomes closed, so that what he is inwardly then outwardly appears. He forgets all external motives which had previously induced hypocrisy, all external restraints. He sinks into outer and utter darkness, which, of course, is spiritual darkness, or darkness in the soul. He shuns the light of heaven, he seeks the congenial shelter of caves and holes, where the evils of his heart can find surroundings to correspond to them. This privation is merciful ; for it prevents him from acquiring an infernal hatred of the good and true, and thereby of intensifying the miseries of his state. He sinks downwards rapidly, continually, until his condition becomes homogeneous, evil is wedded in him to congenial falsity, iniquity and blindness are correlative in him, and the only motive which can thenceforth restrain him from inflicting injury upon others is terrible fear of punishments, which, however, ever and anon is impotent to fully restrain him. This process of deprivation, or *vastation*, is also described in the Word—Behold !”

\* Luke xii. 2, 3.

As he ceased to speak, there came a silence far more terrible than the wailing music I had just heard, a silence that seemed to chill and curdle my blood, and to weigh me down with sadness; and I read on the darkening atmosphere, in pale, fitful, phosphorescent flickerings, the inscription :—

TAKE, THEREFORE, THE TALENT FROM HIM, AND GIVE IT UNTO HIM THAT HATH TEN TALENTS. FOR UNTO EVERY ONE THAT HATH SHALL BE GIVEN, AND HE SHALL HAVE ABUNDANCE; BUT FROM HIM THAT HATH NOT, SHALL BE TAKEN EVEN THAT WHICH HE HATH. AND CAST YE THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT INTO OUTER DARKNESS: THERE SHALL BE WEeping AND GNASHING OF TEETH.\*

I bowed my head, and seemed to murmur the prayer, "O Lord, enter not into judgment with Thy servant!"

"The *fourth* class," resumed Sophos, "consists of those who are inwardly and outwardly evil, who have indeed committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, that is, who have destroyed and driven away out of their souls every love of goodness and truth, who delight in evil, who, because they have been devils on earth, rush down, with blasphemies and cursings, to their own place, the deepest and direst hells. Happily, there are not many such in the world. It is far better for society on earth that men should be restrained from evil by merely external and selfish motives, than that they should throw off all cloaks and all restraints, and make earth as much like hell as they can, by reason of the openness and flagrancy of their sins!"

"In thus guiding, exploring, teaching, and endeavouring to help spirits in the World of Spirits," I said, "angels

\* Matt. xxvi. 28-30.

must indeed find abundance of most congenial employment, for which their wisdom and tenderness will have eminently fitted them."

#### ORDER AND ARRANGEMENT

"True," said Dokeos. "But this enumeration by no means exhausts their uses. Think of the multitudes which continually stream into that world from the natural plane; one new comer enters at each second of time. These are of all ages, and in every variety of state. Premising that the process of judgment now occupies from a few days to thirty years of earthly time, there must be in the World of Spirits at any one time nearly as many spirits from your earth as there are inhabitants of the earth, and they are estimated to be——"

"A thousand millions," I answered.

"But the earth is only one of an innumerable multitude of earths, from all of which spirits continually stream into the World of Spirits. You may, therefore, mentally multiply the thousand millions by as many millions, till numbers overwhelm the thought. And every one of these spirits has to be cared for; they are not houseless and raimentless; they are not an indiscriminate mob, without order and arrangement; the anarchy of confusion does not reign there. Order is essential to existence, and with respect to an enormous proportion of these spirits, they have not principles of order inscribed in their own souls; the order to which they submit must come from without. By means of what agency, then, does the Lord govern all this mass of human beings? They are ignorant, and need to be taught; they are wanderers, and need to be led; they are spiritually children, and need to be governed."

"You enlarge my thoughts, Dokeos," I exclaimed. "Let me ask you, then, how are they housed and provided with raiment?"

"Three things are provided from the Lord for every spirit that enters the World of Spirits,—a habitation, clothing, and food," replied Dokeos.

#### DO SPIRITS AND ANGELS EAT?

"Food? Do they need to eat and drink in the spiritual world? Do angels eat and drink?" I asked.

"Certainly," rejoined Dokeos. "There is but one being who is self-subsisting, and He is God. All other beings receive life from Him; but in order to contain that life, they need to draw from the world external to them the materials which build up their plane of resistance and reaction. Thus all created beings depend on two sources,—God as the source of their life, and the world as the source of the material whence they maintain their existence. This necessity is on man in the world of natural substance, whence they draw the natural substances requisite for the maintenance of their natural forms. An analogous necessity must exist in the spiritual world, whence they draw the spiritual substances requisite for the maintenance of their spiritual forms.

"Either the substance of their spiritual bodies is eternal, or not eternal: if eternal, then the substance is Divine, for He alone is eternal; if not eternal, the substance needs to be renewed. Needing to be renewed, either it must be renewed by influx from within, or by appropriation from without: but the influx from the Lord is of life, and not of substance. There must also exist planes of reception into which the influx of life can flow; and of reaction by which such influx of life can be termi-

nated, bounded, and contained: hence it must be renewed in another way. In what way, then? Arguing from the only analogy which exists, the substance which needs to be renewed must be renewed from without, by the orderly process of eating and drinking.

"Again: spirits are in the human form, with mouth, teeth, tongue, palate, and stomach: now, nothing exists without having functions implied in its existence. To say that angels possess this masticating, digesting, and assimilating apparatus, and that it has no corresponding use, would be to assert that God had given them organs without functions—that He had made many things in vain. Are you prepared to assert this?"

"You confound me, Dokeos," I replied. "But if this analogy be pressed to all its possible lengths, how far will it lead?"

"I know to what it leads," rejoined Dokeos. "But at present we have to discuss the question, Do the angels eat and drink? The angels who appeared to Abraham in Mamre 'did eat' (Gen. xviii. 8). The Psalmist says of the *manna* given to the Israelites, 'He rained down manna from heaven upon them, and had given them of the corn of heaven. Man did eat angels' food' (Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25). The rich man in hell desired that Lazarus should 'dip the tip of his finger *in water* to cool *his tongue*.' The Saviour said, 'I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when *I drink it new* with you in My Father's Kingdom' (Matt. xxvi. 29). The marriage-supper of the Lamb and His Bride which is to be celebrated in heaven also implies eating and drinking. All who will come are invited to come, and take of the water of life freely (Rev. xxii. 17). The Tree of Life is to bear twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month (Ezek. xlvii. 12; Rev. xx. 2); thus implying eating in the

World of Spirits, and inasmuch as the same law obtains throughout the whole spiritual world, the act of eating is implied in heaven. The same is implied in the promise, 'Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven' (Matt. viii. 11). Jesus ate of the broiled fish and honeycomb, and also of bread, after His resurrection (Luke xxiv. 43; John xxi. 13, 15); and He said to His disciples, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; *that ye may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom* (Luke xxii. 29, 30). Hence also He said, 'Blessed is he that shall *eat bread in the Kingdom of God*' (Luke xiv. 15). Do not these passages manifestly imply eating in heaven?"

"Yes," I answered, "but are not the eating and drinking of that spiritual kind referred to by the Lord in the statements that we are to eat His flesh and drink His blood?"

"All actions in the spiritual world are representative of internal things. Yet there are also external actions performed, which are thus representative. All things that men or spirits receive are representative of the Divine Love and Wisdom, of which the Lord's flesh and blood were the highest, the Divine symbols. But the symbols are manifold; and all such symbols are representative embodiments of these divine essentials of all existence. The Divine Love and Wisdom produced in this world, for the use of man's body, natural fruits and natural water: in like manner, the Divine Love and Wisdom produce in the spiritual world spiritual fruits and spiritual water, for the use of the spiritual bodies of men. In partaking of those things, the spiritual bodies are nourished and sustained, and at the same time those who partake are quickened with new perceptions of Divine

Wisdom and new realizations of Divine Love. The inmost cause, the creative power of the Lord, and its external effect, the fruits and water, are but the diverse forms of the same thing; and the sustentation of the spiritual bodies of the angels and their internal increase in love and wisdom are simultaneous and correspondent operations of the Lord in them. They live and feast in God; yet there is an external feasting, as well as internal repasts; and by both operating together, the twofold result is produced,—the souls of the angels are fed, and their external forms are sustained.”

“Of course, they are not flesh-eaters, nor drunkards,” I said.

“The original intention of the Lord concerning man is expressed in the Word:—‘Of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat;’ therefore the Lord ‘made to grow out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.’ Were man in the true order of his existence, no animal food would be eaten on earth. Drunkenness is bestiality: the wine that the Lord has promised to drink in heaven is ‘new wine.’ The angels eat and drink only so much as is needful for their sustenance. Their food is the etherealized substance of heaven. Grossness and gluttony, like drunkenness, cannot enter there. The vile and filthy are infernal; vileness and filthiness are in hell.”

#### THE RAIMENT OF SPIRITS AND ANGELS.

“Well, Dokeos,” I said, “let us return. You were saying that food, raiment, and habitations are provided for all spirits by the Lord. What kinds of raiment do they wear?”

“Raiment corresponds to truth: such as are the

knowledges of truth which spirits possess, such also their raiment appears," replied Dokeos. "It is produced upon and around the persons of the spirits by the direct operation of the Lord, in accordance with the universal law of that world,—that such as men are inwardly, such also are all the surroundings by which they are environed. Hence their raiment accords with their state. To those who were under the altar white robes were given (Rev. vi. 11); the sealed, and those who had come up through much tribulation, were also arrayed in white robes (vii. 13); the Lamb was to *feed* them, and lead them to living fountains of waters (ver. 17); the guests at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb are to be 'arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is [or represents] the righteousness of the saints' (Rev. xix. 8). The angels who have appeared to various persons as recorded in the Word are sometimes described as to their raiment, and in all such cases it was the outward representative of their state. So also the Lord is described in different garbs, as by Ezekiel, Daniel, and John; but in all such descriptions the overpowering glory of the Most High was the principal impression produced on the mind of the seer.

"Remembering, however, the many-coloured radiance of the New Jerusalem, the flashing jewellery of the high priest's breastplate, which was fashioned according to the pattern seen by Moses in the Mount, and the fact that all colours are symbolic of Divine excellences in the Lord, and of human excellences as received by man from the Lord, who can doubt that the raiment of the angels is varied in form and beautiful in colour, as though dipped in a bath of rainbows, their hues being as much more intense as the light of heaven surpasses that of earth? According to the functions they perform, their



continuance in any one state, the superiority of their wisdom, and the inner glory of their love, so, correspondingly, is the manner and colour of their robes. God, who has painted with wondrous tints the flowers of the field, the plumage of birds, and the iridescent scales of fishes; who has fixed in precious stones pure and lustrous hues, made them to flicker in the opal, and to tremble along the surface of the pearl; who has caused the sunrise and the sunset to fling many-hued glories over the cloud-land which it revisits, or from which it departs,—who has implanted in human hearts the love of colour, and compelled men to associate the idea of colour with all perfect conceptions of beauty,—He has thus prepared the human mind to appreciate as well as admire the transcendent tints of heavenly things. The pearly whites and greys, the glorious crimsons and ambers, the tender purples and greens which are painted on the face of the natural heavens, are but intimations by correspondence of the more wondrous and dazzling realities of the spiritual heavens, which the natural heavens do only foreshadow and typify.”

“I can heartily accept this,” I said. “Now, if you please, a word as to spiritual habitations.”

#### SPIRITUAL HABITATIONS.

“A heavenly city without habitations would be a contradiction,” rejoined Dokeos. “Hence the Lord said, ‘In My Father’s house are many mansions.’ The millions of heavenly inhabitants without homes would be only a promiscuous concourse. ‘Home’ is the earthly synonym of heaven. The invariable law of the whole spiritual world, however, is that such as is the character of the soul, such, correspondingly, must be the character of its spiritual house. The house of the soul is produced

directly from the Lord according to this universal law. Hence we are told that Abraham 'looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God' (Heb. xi. 10). The Apostle also assures us that 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens' (2 Cor. v. 1). This 'house' immediately refers to the spiritual body of the saved; but, as the terms imply, it involves a further reference to the house which the spiritual body will itself inhabit and occupy. There is a perfect conformity, or, as we style it, *correspondence*, between the character of the soul and its house, in both senses. The spiritual body of the angel is the perfect type in beauty of the special virtue or grace that predominates in him; and his home will be only a larger and more exterior counterpart of his inmost character.

"Hence, in the World of Spirits, there is every variety of house, some deformed and even filthy, some beautiful, but all imperfect, as compared with the habitations of angels. As the spirits change from their mixed state, so their habitations change. They 'go from house to house.' Their eternal home will be a mansion in heaven; or a hovel, a cave, or a prison in hell."

"This kind of teaching, Dokeos," I remarked, "makes the spiritual world to seem very substantial and very real."

#### THE LAW OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

"The spiritual world is both," returned Sophos. "It is as substantial as the natural world, and for each inhabitant far more abiding. It is so real that the spirits who dwell there could not refrain from smiling if they

were told that they were 'only shadows inhabiting a shadowy world.' The laws which govern that world are different from those which govern the grosser material of earth. Transformations, which in the realm of nature are slow, in the realm of spirit are immediate ; yet they are ever produced according to *law*. The law may be expressed :—*All the subjective states of the soul, or of associated souls, are projected into corresponding external forms, and become objects of sight, touch, taste, scent, or hearing.* These external forms are permanent or evanescent, their appearances are stable or changing, being added to, modified, or taken from, according as the particulars in the state of the soul, to which they exactly correspond, are abiding or changing."

"But this is Idealism," I exclaimed. "It is what Berkeley and others have affirmed of the material world."

"There was their error," replied Sophos. "They discerned what, to some extent, was the necessary law as to *mind*; and they pretended that this was also the law as to *matter*. Their theory as to mind and spiritual things was, in a great measure, true : their application of this theory to matter was a fallacy. Matter as distinctly exists apart from mind, as mind exists apart from matter. They ignored the distinction, and confusion was the necessary consequence."

"We need not discuss that point, Sophos," I observed. "I am too much attracted to other matters. The clothing, food, and habitations of spirits in the World of Spirits, then, are furnished, as Dokeos says, from the Lord, according to correspondence. There must necessarily be order and arrangement among them, and as all of them have not the principles of order developed within themselves, the government must come from without. How, then, are they arranged and governed?"

## ARRANGEMENT AND GOVERNMENT.

"I have told you," replied Dokeos, "that every spirit enters at birth into some society of spirits, according to the inborn intellectual character of the child, which, although latent and undeveloped, is certainly in the child's hereditary nature; that such societies in the World of Spirits are connected with corresponding societies in the heavens, and likewise with partially corresponding societies in the hells. (Concerning the plurality of the heavens we shall speak presently.) When a man dies he enters consciously into the society in the World of Spirits to which he belongs; if he ascends thence to either of the heavens, he ascends in the line of his society: if he sinks into any of the hells, he sinks in the line of his society. Hence, all the spirits in each society are governed by the angels of that society. It is the ideal of all human governments, a real *aristocracy*, the domination of *the best*. The fittest to govern rules. Who decides on this fitness? Not the governors—they might easily misjudge: not the governed—how could they judge? The Lord appoints to each his duty according to the ability of each; or rather, each falls inevitably into his place, and into his use in that place. His use and his fitness for the use are seen, recognised, and admitted by all. No angel desires power or authority; any angel would prefer another before himself; but those whose gift it is, lead; those whose true place it is, submit; and the joy of each is full."

"Is the authority of the rulers in the World of Spirits never challenged?" I asked.

"Yes. But the inevitable law of the spiritual world is that love conjoins, and aversion separates. Those who internally avert themselves actually turn away; they

remove themselves, seeking their like. There are spirits there who would fain set up empires that they might govern ; who persuade others to submit to them for a little while, and who would, if possible, foment rebellion and revolution. They sink continually into their real, their interior state : burning with the lust of dominion, their predominant evil, they become devils, and seek to make slaves in hell. I must repeat that during the whole period of sojourn in the world of spirits, the process of judgment, of *exploration* and *vastation*, continually advances. Men rise or sink into real harmony with their interior loves. The principle which animates all angelic rulers is the love of serving ; and governing is no more than the kind of ministration which some are best fitted to perform. Even on earth you retain the idea, and those who really rule are by you called 'Ministers of State : ' wisely regarded, they are the servants of society, ministering for the common good, performing thus services of a high and important character. The love of power is unknown among the angels : the affection which rules there is the love of use. The principle of selection is the choice of the fittest to do the work."

"If society could only know wisely how to choose the best!" I exclaimed.

"Choice on earth is necessarily an experiment," rejoined Dokeos. "But there is this consolation—the form of government which each nation has either chosen, or to which it continues to submit, is the best that the state of the nation will allow of. Forms of government must become modified along with the changes of the national condition, or they will inevitably be overthrown. The contrarieties which exist on earth are needful for affording to the people opportunities of choice, and the formation of their voluntary character. This is man's great task on earth. In the World of Spirits, he throws

off all that is not in agreement with that voluntary character. The process of formation, therefore, is followed by a process of uncovering. The final homes of all men will be the full embodiment, in all things that surround them, of the state which is theirs and complete images of which they are."

"You have spoken of the general government of spirits in the World of Spirits, and you have also spoken of their habitations,—have they any social, or domestic life?" I asked.

"Your question," rejoined Dokeos, "introduces us to a most interesting group of topics, concerning sex, and the relation of the sexes in the spiritual world. In discussing these subjects, I need hardly request you to banish from your mind all gross and unworthy thoughts. The greatest proof of the reality of man's Fall is furnished in the fact that he thinks impurely concerning intrinsically holy things. All Divine arrangements, whether in heaven or on earth, are pure, because God is pure. The first point to be settled is—

#### " ' HAVE SPIRITS AND ANGELS SEX ? ' "

"What reasons can you urge why spirits and angels should be destitute of sex?"

"There is something sensual and impure connected with the idea of sex, and sexual relations," I replied, "and that is my first objection. In the second place, there is no hint given in the Scriptures that angels are either masculine or feminine. In the third place, the Saviour teaches that there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage in heaven, leading us to infer that the feelings which prompt to marriage cannot there be experienced. You have also asserted as a principle, that the existence of organs imply functions : as the functions

of marriage are not performed, I conclude that the angels are sexless. So again, it is said that the 144,000 sealed ones 'were not defiled with women, for they are virgins' (Rev. xii. 4); thus implying that virginity is the order of heaven. Although our Saviour's human body was undoubtedly masculine, He having been circumcised on the eighth day, yet He was virgin and unmarried, and in this isolation ascended above all the heavens: if the state of the angels at all resembles His state, they, too, will be unmarried. These are the chief of my objections."

"They deserve careful consideration," rejoined Dokeos. "You must perceive, however, that your argument confuses two distinct topics—that of sex, and that of marriage. For the purpose of clear understanding, it will be well to keep these topics separate. Allow me, therefore, to ask you a few questions."

"Willingly."

"What is that which determines the form of the body?"

"Its parentage: like produces like," I replied.

"But my question is more specific. Both male and female children are offspring of human parents. What is that which determines the form of the body as to sex?"

"I do not know," I answered. "Physiologists admit that it is a mystery."

"Bodies, however, are never born of one sex, and then, after birth, change to the other sex. Sex, therefore, from its germinal condition, is a fixed fact in the body. Yet so soon as the spirit is separated from the body, the latter begins to decompose, and its form becomes obliterated. What was it, then, which retained to the body its specific form; and by adjunction to which its substances remained combined in a human body?"

"Evidently the spirit which dwelt in the body retained to it its form," I replied.

"But if the spirit retained to the body its specific form as to sex, was it not the spirit which originally determined what sex the body should be of?" asked Dokeos.

"But this would lead to the conclusion that sex must be primarily in the soul," I observed.

"True," answered Dokeos, "and to this conclusion we must come. Nothing can exist in the effect which does not primarily exist in the cause that produced the effect. If form be in the body, and is retained to the body by adjunction to the spirit, and is lost by the body so soon as disjoined from the spirit, it must be the form of the spirit which determined the form of the body. But to impart form, the spirit must possess form; and to impart the human form, it must possess the human form; and to impart form as to sex, it must possess a sexual form; for nothing can bestow on another thing what it does not itself possess. Reasoning thus from the effect, the material body, to its cause, the spiritual organism, we must conclude that sex is in the spirit."

"But this line of reasoning would prove that inasmuch as God is the Great First Cause, sex must exist in Him," I urged.

"I admit it," replied Dokeos. "All things which God has made must spiritually or materially shadow forth and represent something which exists Divinely in Him. We shall presently say something of that in the Deity which is represented by sex in the things which He has made. For the moment we must think of man. We previously saw that all spirits and angels proceeded from the human race: all members of the human family have had sex; but sex is from the spirit, and thence derivatively in the body; is it not reasonable to conclude then, that the



spirit after it has entered fully and consciously into the spiritual state or world, retains the sex which it possessed from the beginning?"

"If sex really exist in the soul, then, inasmuch as death is only the putting off of the outer case, or fleshly envelope, the body, it is not unreasonable to so conclude," I answered.

"One who has been a man in the natural world will continue to be a man there : one who was a woman here will be a woman there," resumed Dokeos. "How else would the consciousness of identity be preserved? How else could those who had been married partners on earth hope to recognise and to remain with their married partners in the spiritual world? How else could parents hope to recognise their children, or children their parents? Sex will undoubtedly be preserved in the features, and in the general characteristics of the form, why should it be otherwise abolished?"

"But all this is contingent upon the idea that sex is primarily in the soul. On this point I am not quite clear," I rejoined.

Sophos replied to me. "You will admit that the whole body of a man or woman is homogeneous, and therefore sexually characteristic. The distinction as to sex pervades every part of the physical structure. It betrays itself in the roundness and plumpness of the female figure, in the smoothness and delicacy of her skin, and in the superior fineness of her nervous system. It determines the general form, and the consequent arrangement of the suppositious triangle, which in man has the base in his shoulders and the apex downwards, and in woman has the base across the hips and the apex upwards. Sex also evinces itself in the arrangements of the mammary glands, in the more slender muscles, lighter

bones, sloping shoulders, beardless face, relatively shorter stature, and the tone of the voice. Woman is not, as some physiologists affirm, 'an *undeveloped* man,' a being whose pre-natal development toward manhood was arrested at a certain point. She is constitutionally diverse from man. The distinction of sex is thus indicated in everything connected with the bodies of both sexes. As Dokeos has urged: this distinction must exist in the soul, the formative cause of the body, and which retains to the body, and to all things which pertain to it, its characteristic form. To deny this would land you in the absurdity, that something exists in the effect of which there was no cause.

"But, further, the distinctions of sex may be traced in the character of the *minds* of man and woman. Both possess an affectional and also an intellectual nature; but who knows not that the predominant characteristic of the male is intellect rather than affection; while in the female, the predominant characteristic is affection rather than intellect? Both sexes possess intellect and affection, but each of these severally predominates in the man and in the woman. The sphere of activity appropriate to each sex is thus indicated. The history of both sexes abundantly illustrates the distinction. No woman has ever attained an equal eminence in science, literature, philosophy or art, with man. Even in music, the female intellect has never been equally creative with that of man. Again: no woman ever invented a labour-saving machine. Her originality, or inventiveness, as it is called, has not been displayed in a matter she has always had the control over, as cooking; or in the production of new contrivances to supersede or facilitate her own special occupations, as spinning, weaving, or sewing. Man is the inventor, the creator. Woman has abundantly surpassed men in

intensity of devotion, in whole-souled self-sacrifice, in the fidelity of conjugal and parental affection. Where women have excelled in more masculine studies, she has been incited thereto by the love of *man's* wisdom, rather than by the love of wisdom for its own sake."

"But are there no exceptions to such a wide-sweeping rule?" I asked.

"There may be. But in affirming that such are exceptional cases, you assert and prove the rule," returned Sophos. "We cannot argue a point like this from the exceptions. Many of those seeming exceptions would only confirm the rule, if all the circumstances were fully known. There are a few many-sided men, who have attained great eminence in many departments of study and labour; and there are a few many-sided women, who appear to combine an extraordinary amount of intellectual power with their affectional energy; yet even in these exceptional cases the intellect predominates in the male, and affection predominates in the female. Their works betray the sex of the worker. Is not 'woman' written legibly in all the literary, artistic, or even scientific works which women have wrought? The specific character of the producer is stamped upon the production; and one of the greatest moulders of character is sex. A few women may possess bass voices, but such are only few: the register and timbre of the female voice are not more fixed than are her other characteristics.

"We must, however, take higher ground in the study of sex. The existence of sex in mankind is not a new principle first introduced with mankind into creation: it is only an additional illustration of a principle that is omnipresent in creation. Everything that the Lord has made is either sexual or typical of sex. The law of sex dominates all animated nature: naturalists are obliged to

observe the invariable distinction. The same law necessarily determines the classification of all things of the vegetable kingdom. The world itself is broadly distinguished into land and water. You can think of nothing that is not either active or passive, an agent or a reagent, a giver or a recipient. The force which you call electricity, in all its multiforms, is either positive or negative. The dualism which may be everywhere traced in the creation of God is inevitable ; it bisects all nature. All sources of fecundity are to be found in marriage, or what is the type of marriage, which in the most general terms may be defined as the united action of an active agent, and the reaction of a passive agent."

"Whence does this dualism proceed?" I asked.

"It proceeds from the dualism which is in the Divine Nature, Love and Wisdom, which unite in the Divine Power or Operation," rejoined Sophos. "The being who stands as the masterpiece of God's creation most fully embodies and illustrates the universal law. The inevitable dualism is perceptible in man's spiritual constitution, *Will* and *Understanding*, which unite in every mental operation which man performs. It is visible in his dual constitution while on earth, *Soul* and *Body*, which unite in every physical operation which he performs. It is further traceable in the two hemispheres of his brain, in the pairs of organs which he possesses, and in every single organ which also is divided into two halves united by the medial line, and both sides of which combine in every act. It is still more clearly indicated in the distinction of mankind into male and female, or, as the Latins expressed it, the distinction of *homo* into *vir* and *mulier*. Sex is thus a universal representative fact, because it primarily exists in the Divine Nature. The Divine prototypes of sex, of which Dokeos spoke, are the

Divine Wisdom and Love, the Divine Intelligence and Will. In Him these essentials are perfectly united ; and human pairs were created that they might severally receive their special and appropriate gift, and by true spiritual union, that they together might form, as it were, one angel.

“ Here, then, we have at once the origin of sex and the Divine purpose and intention of marriage. The two sexes supplement and complement each other. If in marriage man is the intellectual part, the *head*; woman is the affectional part, the *heart*. Each sex without the other is relatively deficient and incomplete ; only in true soul-marriage can human fulness and perfection be found. The same invariable dualism pervades the Christian religion, which is a system of love and faith, uniting in good works. Both love and faith are essential to the Christian life ; and they alone are prolific in the bringing forth of spiritual fruit, that is, in spiritual productive power, in whose soul this sacred marriage of goodness and truth, of charity and faith, of love and wisdom, has been consummated.”

“ You remind me,” I remarked, “ of some exquisite lines by a modern poet :—

‘ — Woman is not undeveloped man,  
But diverse ; could we make her as the man  
Sweet love were slain : his dearest bond is this,  
Not like to like, but like in difference.  
Yet in the long years liker must they grow ;  
The man be more of woman ; she of man ;  
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,  
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world ;  
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,—  
Not lose the child-like in the larger mind ;  
Till at the last, she set herself to man,  
Like perfect music unto noble words.’” \*

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\* Tennyson, *The Princess*.

"The words are beautiful because they are true," rejoined Sophos. "But the prototypes of sex being thus primarily in the Divine Nature, and sex being representatively in all things which God has made, and being derivatively in the soul, and thence descending into the body, must not sex and the symbols of sex be eternal? I see not how this can be answered negatively. It, therefore, follows that the spirits of men and women have sex; that there are both male and female angels, who were on earth men and women, and who retain in heaven all that belonged to them as sexually distinguished human beings in the natural world.

"Another consequence follows on this reasoning. Inasmuch as the distinction of sex is the representative image of a Divine prototype, and is universally implanted in creation, is it not disparaging to the purity and wisdom of God, to say, as you said, that there is something necessarily impure in the distinctions of sex?"

"I am properly rebuked, Sophos," I replied. "You have enlarged and enlightened my thought. But is there any hint given in the Word as to the sexuality of angels?"

Sophos waved his hand to Dokeos to answer my question. He said, "If it were true that the Scriptures furnish no hint as to the sexuality of angels, the Scriptures would then furnish no denial of the proposition that angels possess sex. But it is not safe to be over-confident as to the silence of the Scriptures on this point. Angels are therein spoken of as *men*. One angel is spoken of as a 'Man of God' (Judges xiii.). In all passages referring to the appearances of angels, the pronouns *he* and *him* are employed, thus indicating sex. The reason why male angels are only spoken of in the Word, is because the ministering uses performed by those angels who have appeared to men were suited to the genius and character

of male angels. We must assert, then, that these angels were, what they are designated, *men*. Must we thence conclude that there are no *women* in heaven—that no woman is saved? Surely you object to that inference. Or must we conclude that all the women who enter into heaven are previously transformed into *men*? Such a transformation defies definition. Or must we conclude then, that, after all, the angels who are styled ‘men’ are not men; but that they, and also all women, who enter into heaven, are transformed into neuter nondescripts as to sex?”

“I am perplexed by your reasoning, Dokeos,” I rejoined.

“If sex does not exist in heaven, certainly the idea of sex is not abolished,” continued Dokeos; “for if only one thing would preserve the idea, the ‘marriage-supper of the Lamb,’ which takes place in heaven, would subserve that purpose! The Church being the ‘Bride, the Lamb’s Wife,’ would preserve the idea. But, further, the Apostle John saw in the World of Spirits a representation of the Church, ‘a *woman* clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars’ (Rev. xii. 1); he likewise saw a representation of the mystic Babylon, ‘a *woman* who sat on a scarlet beast,’ and ‘upon her forehead a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth’ (Rev. xviii. 1-5). May not these representative women whom John saw be regarded as proofs that *women* exist in the spiritual world as well as men.”

“They are at least proofs that the idea of womanhood exists there,” I answered.

“If the idea exists there, and all ideas are there exteriorly represented, woman must herself exist there,” rejoined Dokeos.

I was silent.

"But you said that there is something sensual and impure connected with the idea of sex," resumed Dokeos. "In addition to the general argument which Sophos has urged, other considerations will show how fallacious is this opinion. When God formed man in His own image, as we read,—'in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them,' was there anything sensual and impure connected with the idea of sex? Man and woman severally typified and embodied the Divine characteristics which unitedly existed in the nature of their archetype. If sex was sensual and impure in the types it must have been sensual and impure in the Divine Prototype. But we dare not so conclude. Consequently the idea of sex is not sensual or impure."

"I ought to have restricted my statement to the sexual relation," I observed.

"That restriction will not avail you," rejoined Dokeos. "Organs imply functions. The existence of sex of necessity implies sexual relations. This relation was manifestly referred to in the first blessing pronounced on mankind by the Infinite Purity—'And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it' (Gen. i. 27, 28). Marriage is a holy institution: it was appointed by God, who is infinitely holy! It was He who saw that among all living creatures there was no help meet for man; it was He who formed the woman, and brought her to the man; it was He who taught the man to say 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,' and also to utter the prophetic injunction—'therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh' (Gen. ii. 18-24). Whatever is essential to



marriage, therefore, is the appointment of God. Can we venture to declare of what God has instituted that it is sensual and impure?"

I bowed my head and was silent.

"It is not sex, or the sexual relation, that is impure," resumed Dokeos; "but the uncleanness and iniquity of men have associated with such matters impure thoughts. Vice has corrupted the purity of marriage, and has defiled its inner sanctuary. Because sex and the sexual relation were so holy, the perversions of true order in such respects have become so abominable. The fall has been so terrible, because the height of sexual purity from which men have fallen was so lofty. Angelic chastity has been perverted into infernal licentiousness. The difficulty which all experience of thinking purely concerning sex and the sexual relation is only a lamentable proof of how universal is the fall. Marriage is the most holy relationship which can exist between two human beings.

"But I observe," continued Dokeos, "that you link together two words which are not necessarily associated. You say that there is something 'sensual *and* impure' in the idea of sexuality: do you mean that all which is sensual, or which pertains to the senses, is impure?"

"My expression certainly involved such a meaning," I replied.

"See how fallacious is such an association of ideas," rejoined Dokeos. "Men before the fall had senses, and these were gratified. Angels have such senses, and which are gratified with appropriate delights. There is a life, an activity of the senses, which is orderly; for the sensual part of human nature is as truly the creation of God as its intellectual or its voluntary part. It is only because this part of man's nature has been made supreme, and has rushed into all manner of evils, that the idea of

impurity has become associated with it. The sensual thoughts of men need to be elevated. The serpent, the symbol of the sensual part of man's nature, must in every man be 'lifted up in the wilderness' through which human life has to toil and struggle, in order that they whom the serpents are destroying may look up and live!

"The essential sanctity of sex and the essential holiness of marriage may be further estimated from the wondrous result which ensues from them—the creation through human parents of an immortal soul, a potential heir to the kingdom of heaven. All other forms of human production rightly seem insignificant when compared with this. Were a child to be born only once in a century, and then under the most rare combination of circumstances, the wisest would marvel at the amazing offspring of married love. The fact that 'the mother's miracle' is so common does not diminish its intrinsic marvellousness. Sex and marriage are the Divinely-appointed means whereby the earth is peopled, and made to be the seminary of heaven. I dare not then stigmatize as essentially impure that which God has appointed to be the only means of achieving so high an end!"

"I was wrong, Dokeos," I rejoined. "You remind me of the fine words of a modern poet, who calls on the moon to

'Touch with shade the bridal door,  
With tender gloom the roof, the wall,  
And breaking let the splendour fall  
To spangle all the happy shore  
By which they rest, and ocean sounds :  
And, star and system rolling past,  
A soul shall draw from out the vast,  
And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved through life of lower phase,  
Result in man, be born and think,  
And act, and love, a closer link  
Betwixt us and the crowning race.\*

You have satisfied me that marriage is holy, that therefore sex is holy. It is sin which has defiled our notions as to sex and the sexual relation; and which has therefore predisposed us to banish sex from our conceptions of heaven."

"To impress the holiness of marriage, and of all things connected with marriage, on the Jews," resumed Dokeos, "God gave them minute directions as to uncleanness, instituted the sacrifice which the new-made mother had to offer, and declared that every first-born male should be consecrated to Him. Thus was preserved in the world the idea of marital purity, which even the permission of polygamy, allowed to the Jews because of the hardness of their hearts, has not been able to destroy."

#### MARRIAGES IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

"Yet marriage is an earthly institution," I urged. "I admit that to Adam and Eve there could have been nothing obnoxious in the idea of there being angelic men and women, or even in the idea of such men and women being united in marriage in heaven, because they had not come to associate any save pure and elevated ideas with sex and the sexual relation. Still, the statement of the Lord as to there being no marriage or giving in marriage in heaven seems to declare, that if the sexes exist in heaven, they do not marry. I abandon the argument as to essential impurity in sex and the sexual relation. I am willing to concede even that there

\* Tennyson's *Epithalamium*, at the end of *In Memoriam*.

must be male and female angels; for I cannot conceive of any process by which sexual characteristics can be obliterated. Yet the possession of sex does not of necessity assert that the sexes are married. Jesus, though a man, was unmarried. He also speaks of some who are born eunuchs, and some who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God's sake (Matt. xix. 12); immediately afterwards, He significantly blessed little children, who certainly do not marry; and declared that unless His disciples became as little children, they could not enter the kingdom of God. He likewise placed a little child in the midst of His disciples as an example of those who were greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And finally, the Word declares that the 144,000 sealed had not been defiled with women, for they were virgins. Do not these facts make out a strong case against marriages in heaven?"

"The arguments are plausible, and demand a careful examination," rejoined Dokeos. "The Lord, while on earth, did not discountenance marriage. He declared that 'He who made them at the beginning made them male and female;' He ascribes to God the prophetic injunction attributed in Genesis to Adam; He added to it the impressive command, 'What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder' (Matt. xix. 6). He thus asserted the sanctity of marriage in the most solemn manner; that God joins together truly married partners; and, further, that such marriages are indissoluble."

"Yet death divides even those whom God hath joined," I urged.

"Yes; for a little while," replied Dokeos. "But in the very nature of things, such will yearn for each other's society, will seek each other, the one who dies first will

await the coming of the earthly survivor, and when at length they meet—for they will meet—there will be a closer and more intimate union, a deeper love between them than is possible between either of them and any other being. Such spiritual union, such a clinging intimacy, such inmost association and fellowship of feelings and thoughts, is the marriage of angels. God hath joined them together by indissoluble bonds; death, like a temporary journey which one of them may need to make in advance of the other, may separate them for a little while; but even death cannot keep them asunder, since both have to die! Such heart-union can subsist only between two, and those of different sex. The interior life of no human being or angel is complete until they have felt such a drawing forth of all the love potencies of their nature; until the male has found the female who can become the love of his wisdom; or until the female can find the male who can be the wisdom of her love; and both helps meet for each other, can become together one in the Lord."

"If the conception of marriage in the spiritual world extends no farther than such heart-unions, I can see that they are inevitable, and heavenly," I rejoined.

"Such a heart-union is the essential of marriage," replied Dokeos. "True marriage cannot exist without such a perfect oneness of feeling and thought, such an intimate union of wisdom and love. The sordid associations of earth are not marriage: they are concubinage legitimized by the customs of society. If, then, the spiritual essentials of marriage can and must exist in heaven, and if, therefore, sex is an eternal fact, and if such soul-unions can take place only between two angels, and those of different sex, ultimations of the internal affection will inevitably follow. Such marriages are God-

made, because such lovers are joined together by God. Such marriages are also indissoluble, for all that God does has respect to eternity. In heaven every orderly form of love will be triumphant; but the most prolific, interior, and sacred of loves is that which can subsist only between married partners; therefore marriage-unions and marriage-love must be possible in heaven."

"As a philosophic idea, it does not seem unreasonable," I answered; "but what are we to do with the opposing arguments? The Saviour held a sweet intimacy with the sisters of Lazarus at Bethany, yet He was unmarried!"

Sophos answered me. "Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh. In His Divine nature love and wisdom are infinitely united: they twain are one. All forms and modes of love come from Him as their Divine original and source. Married love, as to its essentials, is the union in one man and one woman, whether human or angelic, of wisdom in the male and love in the female; thus symbolizing the infinite union of love and wisdom in God. But God in Christ has not left Himself wifeless: the Church is His 'Bride and Wife;' He is the Giver, and the Church receives His gifts; He is the Divine Active Power, and the Church furnishes the passive or re-active plane. The union between Christ and His Church is thus a second sanction and prototype of marriage. This union is an eternal union, and the marriage of individual angels, which represents this sacred covenant, must also be an eternal marriage."

"But the union between the Lord and His Church is mystical, while the marriage unions of angels you represent as real," I objected.

"True," rejoined Sophos. "Angels exist on the same plane, they are alike in the form and composition of their spiritual bodies; they were created sexually distinct

as to their character in all things that they might become one. The Lord and the Church exist on different planes, and the union that can subsist between them is that of reciprocal love ; the down-flowing of life and joy from the Lord, and the up-looking to the Lord of the Church. The two unions are analogous, not identical. Yet by such an analogy, the Lord has presented a new sanction and type of marriage ; which, because it most completely symbolizes the highest union, that of love and wisdom in God, is the highest form of union that men or angels can know and realise."

"Why could not the union of angels with angels be mystical, as is the union of angels and the Lord?" I asked.

"For the reason already given," replied Sophos, "they exist on the same plane : and for this further reason, that the reality of their unions is the source of a more intense and vivid happiness than could result from a mystical union merely. The joy of each angel is thus doubled—the joy of the mystical conjunction with the Lord, who is above all, and the joy of the communion with his soul-wife, or her soul-husband, who dwells on the same plane."

"But why are they not celibate?" I asked.

"Would depriving the angels of the possibility of all the interior harmony, love, tenderness, confidence, and blessedness, which alone are to be found and realised in genuine soul-marriage, increase the joy of heaven, or diminish it?" demanded Sophos.

"I cannot say that such a deprivation would increase their joy," I replied.

"But the joy of the angels is full ! Surely, then, this fountain of blessedness, the love-union of two souls who were Divinely fashioned to be the eternal complement

and therefore the eternal companion of each other, will not be denied to the angels. Those who had begun to experience the earthly dawns of such a love and joy could never be fully satisfied in heaven without its renewal, its continuance, and its increase."

"But the Lord set up a little child as the pattern of the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," I urged, "and they are celibate."

"Children are in the innocence of ignorance," rejoined Sophos; "but because they are innocent they were used by the Lord to symbolize the innocence of wisdom, that mature innocence which has known the assaults of evil and has triumphed. Surely you will not say that the Lord meant that men are to return to the ignorance of childhood, in order that they might regain the innocence of childhood! Two types of innocence are employed in the Word, the lamb and the little child: the lamb represents innocence that is external, such as that of childhood really is; the little child represents the internal innocence of wisdom, such as that of the angels. The Lord's invitation to the little children to come unto Him, therefore, includes all who are in innocence, whether they be infants or adults, in the innocence of ignorance, or in the higher innocence of wisdom. To wish men to become *as* lambs, or *as* little children, is not enjoining them to become lambs or children! The celibacy of children is the result of their immaturity: in heaven angels will increase in the maturity of spiritual development for ever."

"But the 144,000 sealed were virgins, they had not been defiled with women—were they not celibate?" I urged.

"Was the marriage-union of Adam and Eve in Eden a defilement of either?" asked Sophos. "Does the



marriage of those whom God hath joined together defile the husband or the wife? Surely not: marriage is holy, not defiling. What, then, is meant by the statement that these sealed ones were the undefiled, the virgins?

“Do you not remember what we said as to the sons of God seeing the daughters of men, that they were fair, and choosing them wives? *Wives* in the Word represent affections: when spoken of in a good sense, women denote good affections of all kinds; when spoken of in a bad sense, women denote evil affections of all kinds. When it is said that these sealed ones were not defiled with women, it is meant that the saved in heaven had not committed spiritual adultery or fornication by cherishing or dallying with evil. When it is said that they were virgins, it is meant that they had kept pure from the evil, and loved the Lord above all things with a virgin heart. Whether married or unmarried, young or old, male or female, all may in this sense be among the undefiled, virgins unto the Lord, members of His Church, the Lamb’s Bride and Wife. The promises made in the Word to the virgins of Israel and Judah, the virgin daughters of Zion and the virgins of Jerusalem, or ‘the virgin daughter of my people,’ are not intended to apply solely to women, or to the unmarried. The Lord likened all the Church to ten virgins: surely He did not thereby exclude all the married! A virgin heart, spiritually betrothed to the Lord, may be found in one who is a husband or a wife, as also it may be found in one who is unmarried. The characteristic of these virgins is that ‘they follow the Lord whithersoever He goeth!’ All true followers of the Lord who have kept their hearts pure from evil loves are the undefiled, the virgin members of the Lord’s Bride.

“Because the Lord is the Divine Bridegroom and

Husband of His Church, the Word employs terms which pertain to human marriage to express various spiritual relations of man to the Lord: spiritual marriage is thus conjunction with the Lord; spiritual fornication and adultery express unfaithfulness to the Divine Bridegroom, wandering away from the Lord after other impure and opposing affections; the internal states of the Jews and Samaritans were depicted by Ezekiel under the terrible description of two harlots, Aholah and Aholibah; the Jews were characterized by the Lord as a wicked and adulterous generation; the promise to Abraham of an innumerable posterity denotes the unending increase within the souls of the regenerate and of the angels of knowledges of truth and good affections, which are represented as spiritual sons and daughters; the genealogical tables in the Word, interiorly understood, describe the process and order of spiritual parentage, resulting in the specific truth or good affection denoted by the last name in the series. Just as you might describe the intellectual process of reasoning and inquiry which had prepared your mind for the inception of a final conclusion, and might mark off and name the completed stages of the process, so the Word describes, as genealogies, succeeding states resulting in the state which terminates the series. The basis of this important group of correspondences is sex and the sexual relation. Abolish these latter, and the angels would fail to comprehend the references thereto in the Word!"

"You deeply interest me, Sophos, by this mode of opening the Scriptures," I remarked. "How do you meet the difficulty presented in the statement of the Lord that in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage?"

"The meaning of the Lord's words immediately per-

tiuent to the Sadducee's question was, that in heaven there were no such unions as they had mistakenly dignified by the holy title of marriage ; that such a conception of marriage as they were capable of entertaining was unknown and impossible in heaven. The marriage they spoke of was purely a Sadducean notion of marriage, merely carnal : none such is in heaven.

" The Lord does not say *there is no marriage in heaven* ; but that ' in the resurrection *they* neither marry '—as men of their own motion—' nor are given in marriage '—as women by their relatives ; but surely this does not prevent God from joining together two souls in the abiding union of holy love. If death could eternally separate souls which internally were altogether akin, death would provoke an eternal sorrow.

" The Lord continually spake in parables to those who asked Him questions, because they were not able to bear the unclothed truth. To the Sadducees He could not speak of any higher marriage than that which was in their thoughts : it would indeed have been ' to cast pearls before swine.' They would have profaned the truth. Even the disciples could only bear to learn the truth in part : hence the Lord said, ' I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.'

" Marriage, like sex, is representative. Such a marriage as the Sadducees spoke of represents the infernal union of evil with falsity. To such a marriage the Lord refers in another statement—' As in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, *marrying and giving in marriage*, until the day that Noe entered into the ark' (Matt. xxiv. 38, 39). Such a ' marrying and giving in marriage,' in both statements, depicts the impure union of evil and falsity, and not the heavenly marriage of wisdom and love, of faith and charity, of

goodness and truth. Of course in heaven such a union of evil and falsity, or any external association which could represent it, is impossible.

"The object of the marriage referred to by the Sadducees was to raise up seed to the brother,—merely for the purpose of procreation. Such a purpose is altogether restricted to earth, where alone such births are possible. The union of souls in heavenly marriage results in spiritual proliferations—in the increase of love and wisdom, of joy and gladness, of innocence, peace, and tenderness in both the man-angel and the woman-angel. Hence again no such marriages as that described by the Sadducees are possible in heaven.

"The basis of the heavenly marriage is the union of love and wisdom in the soul of each man or woman. This basis must be laid in the earth-life of both the man and the woman. Hence, even on earth, only those who internally are pure and good can become really married, in the highest sense of marriage. Only such are joined together by God; but of such the Saviour declares that '*they are no more twain!*' If they are *no more twain* but one, they can never more be sundered: *henceforth they are eternally one*. God will not separate them, for He had joined them together: angels will not, for their married joy adds to the sum total of the joys of heaven: they themselves will not separate, for their lives flow together in ever-increasing unity. The marriage of such in heaven is the ultimatum of the heavenly marriage of goodness and truth which had begun in them on earth; and, in this sense, the earth-life is the beginning-place of the heavenly marriage, to be increasingly realised for ever.

"On these various grounds, then," concluded Sophos, "I affirm that, in His reply to the Sadducees, the Lord did not teach that there are no marriages in heaven."

"The Sadducees must have so understood Him," I remarked.

"The Jews must have understood Him to refer to Herod's temple when He said, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up.' It was only to His disciples, after the multitude had departed, that the Lord explained the parables which He had uttered to the people; and even to them He explained His meaning only 'as they were able to bear it.' The conclusion is evident: the Lord ever adapted His instructions to the states and capacities of His hearers. Only to the disciples was it given 'to know the mysteries of the kingdom.'

"The concealments of truth beneath veils of parable and symbolry, which the Lord adopted, are certainly as remarkable as His open explanations of truth. Thus, His reply to the objection urged against His claiming to be God (John x. 34, 36); His evasion of the question of the Pharisees as to the authority by which He wrought (Matt. xxi. 25-27); His silencing the pharisaic lawyer (Matt. xxii. 35-40); and the Herodians as to paying tribute (Matt. xxii. 16-21). Thus also His statements that the father is not to be called father, nor any one teacher or master; that it is as difficult for a rich man to enter into heaven as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle; that friends are to be made of the unrighteous mammon; that when one cheek is smitten, the other is to be turned to the smiter; that the coat is also to be surrendered to him who would take the cloak; that offending hands and feet were to be cut off, and an offending eye to be plucked out; or that the father and mother were to be hated. To this class of partially veiled truths the reply to the insidious question of the Sadducees of right belongs.'

"Why were these concealed truths uttered at all?" I asked.

"Firstly, because the querists were unable to receive truths openly expressed," replied Sophos; "and secondly, because the key for the unlocking of such treasures of wisdom was intended to be put into the possession of the Church in a better and fitter time."

"Well, Sophos, you have disposed of all my objections save one: what did the Lord mean by His teaching as to eunuchs?" I asked.

"The Lord had been expounding the Divine law of marriage, and had announced that those whom God had joined were thenceforth inseparable; the disciples, shocked at the idea of the indissoluble character of marriage, had said, 'If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.' The Lord answered, 'All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.' To what 'saying' did He refer?"

"To the disciples' remark, 'it is not good to marry,'" I replied.

"Surely not!" rejoined Sophos. "The remark of the disciples was an objection to what Jesus had taught; it proved how unable they were to understand the Divine teaching, that 'those whom God had joined together could not be put asunder.' The 'saying' which all 'could not receive' is the 'saying' which He Himself had previously uttered; certainly not the objection of the disciples to His teaching! The Lord proceeds to show who they are to whom it is given to receive His previous teachings as to the indissoluble nature of marriage. He says: 'For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of

heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it' (Matt. xix. 12). Those to whom it is given to receive the Lord's 'saying' concerning marriage are here spoken of as 'eunuchs.'

"To perceive any meaning in these words, they must be spiritually understood. But it is not difficult to perceive their spiritual signification. The Lord here means by 'eunuchs' what is meant in the Revelation by 'virgins,' those who are 'not defiled with women.' These 'eunuchs' are the regenerate, who may be distinguished into three classes,—*First*, those who are eunuchs from their mother's womb, 'the celestial;' *secondly*, those who have been made eunuchs by men, 'the spiritual;' *thirdly*, those who have made themselves eunuchs, 'the natural.' *The mother's womb* signifies celestial love and innocence; they who are 'born eunuchs' are those who have been spiritually born again into a state of celestial love of the Lord and goodness. *Man* signifies the understanding of truth: they who are 'made eunuchs of men' are those who are regenerated into the love of truth, or wisdom. They who have 'made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake' are those who are regenerated into the love of obeying the commandments of God, who have made themselves eunuchs, or have compelled themselves to obey the Divine laws of purity. The reason why these regenerated men are called 'eunuchs' is because this word *representatively* describes the internal chastity of men, as the word 'virgin' representatively describes the spiritual chastity of women. All who are in the heavens are spiritually eunuchs and virgins,—that is, they are wholly chaste and pure: these terms symbolically describe their interior state, and not their exterior condition. Those who are 'pure in heart' shall see God: such are the 'eunuchs' and 'virgins' of the Word, and

unto these it is given to receive the Divine teaching concerning the perpetuity of marriage, and the indissoluble nature of that union which has been effected between truly married partners by God Himself. Others than these 'pure in heart' would defile and profane the truth as to marriages in heaven.

"The Word refers to such spiritual eunuchs in another statement: 'Let not the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord, Unto the eunuchs that keep My sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and take hold of My covenant; even unto them will I give in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off' (Isa. lvi. 3-5). You are aware that God forbade the Israelites from making men physically eunuchs (Deut. xxiii. 1): such eunuchs were not to enter into the congregation of the Lord. But from the statement of Isaiah, it would seem that to be a eunuch was to be a desirable thing: hence the passages are only consistent when we see that the Lord is speaking of those who were eunuchs *spiritually*. To such belong the two promises,—the place and name better than of sons and daughters, the everlasting name,—and to such it also is given to understand and receive the Lord's 'saying' as to marriage."

"The explanation is impressive," I rejoined, "and it shall receive my fullest consideration."

"Before we quit this topic," resumed Sophos, "let me say one thing more. God has implanted in all healthy persons a love of the opposite sex: man shares this instinct with all animals. This feeling of itself is unchaste and unclean. It needs to be born again, to become regenerate. The regeneration of this feeling, however, is not its extirpation: regeneration extirpates nothing except



abuses, perversions, and corruptions of good affections,—that is, evil. This feeling becomes regenerate in proportion as it inwardly and continually inclines to *only one* of the opposite sex, that they twain may become altogether one in the Lord. The love of the opposite sex is not the origin of true marriage affection, but its first rudiment ; thus it is like an external natural principle in which an internal spiritual principle may be implanted. This internal marriage affection can only be experienced by one man with one woman, and by one woman with one man ; hence polygamy is utterly brutal and unclean, fornication is abominable, and adultery consigns to hell. He who delights in adulterous love is already a devil : he murders innocence, robs man and woman of what is beyond price, bears false witness, and violates the spirit of every law of God. Such become in their final state the most malignant and direful of fiends. Marriage being a holy state, anything which tends to profane or to violate it, or to impair the mind and body for the due performance of its obligations, or even to disparage it in the estimation of others, is impious. Hence seduction is utterly infernal. The internal state of a man or woman as to the heavenly marriage of goodness and truth in them is therefore commensurate with the purity of their hearts in regard to the relationship of marriage. The corruption of society is ever in proportion to laxity of principles and of practice in sexual and marital matters ; for, in a most significant sense, a ‘wicked’ generation is ever an ‘adulterous’ one. Spiritual adultery is the infernal marriage of evil and falsity in the soul ; and from its spiritual co-efficient will external adultery continually tend to flow.”

“These are solemn words, Sophos,” I replied, “and I feel them to be true. Are all who have been married on earth reunited when they enter into the spiritual world ?”

"No," answered Sophos. "Only those who have been truly married, joined together by the Lord, become reunited in heavenly marriage. Unhappily, at the present time, the number of such truly married pairs is proportionately few. In the first state after death, all who were married partners on earth see each other, and converse together; but if they are not internally one, if, indeed, they are not similitudes, the affection they felt for each other was only external; and, in common with all external affections, it speedily passes away. Their previous marriage was only *ad*junction, and not *con*junction of soul. The universal law of the spiritual world invariably operates,—similarity of state unites, dissimilarity separates. Nor does such separation cause either to grieve: the union of dissimilars would be bondage to both. For all who go to heaven there is a real marriage-partner, one of whom the male can say, 'She is mine and I am hers,' and of whom the female can say, with the deeper self-surrender of love which the woman is, 'I am his and he is mine!' Adult angels are all married; for heavenly perfection and unmarried life are contradictions."

"And in hell," I asked, "does the same law prevail?"

"The infernal marriage is the union of evil and falsity in the souls," responded Sophos. "In hell it ultimates itself in the adjunction of adultery and harlotry in the persons of a male and female devil; with mental and moral and external rottenness as its inevitable consequence. Internal states there become exteriorly manifest, as in all parts of the spiritual world; the frenzies and furies and loathsomeness which rage and burn within the infernals become visible, and all is corrupt and horrible."

"What most impresses me, Sophos, in all that you tell me is the universality and invariableness of the principles

which appear to underlie the facts you describe," I observed.

"All phenomena are but the exemplifications of principles," rejoined Sophos. "When principles are known, phenomena may almost be predicted. But we have said enough of marriage in the spiritual world.

"Your question to Dokeos, which led to this inquiry, was—Is there any social or even domestic life among spirits in the World of Spirits? Our answer is, There is both. There is social life, arising from the distribution of spirits into societies, the bond of whose union is similarity of internal state: the friendships and intimacies of spirits follow this same law; and of this law of spiritual affinity, the marriages of angels are only the highest and most sacred illustration. If by domestic life you mean, do offspring result from such marriages? I answer, No. Or if you mean, Are those who on earth formed families reunited in the spiritual world? I answer, To the extent that they are internally akin, they are and remain reunited. But the final abode of every spirit is determined according to the law of state. Merely natural affections fade away: that alone which is real, because internal, remains."

"And those infants and children who die in their infancy and childhood—what of them?" I asked.

#### ANGELS AND THE SPIRITS OF CHILDREN.

"The question is important," rejoined Dokeos. "More than half the human family perish before attaining fourteen years of age. Of these the larger proportion die before their second year of earthly existence. This infant mortality is most excessive among nations which are morally the most corrupt. As corruption in regard to

marriage increases, the number of births diminishes, and the rate of infant mortality increases : in this way whole tribes and nations have disappeared from the face of the earth. Operating in and by means of natural laws, the Lord removes from the world those who are the least able to live, or those on whom physical depravity has most deeply set its seal. It is a proof of disorder that children die in their childhood : the mortality is in proportion to the disorder that reigns."

"Yet," added Sophos, "all who die prior to adult age are saved : to this rule there is no exception. Baptized or unbaptized, the offspring of Christian or pagan parents, whether their parents were civilized or savage, good or wicked, all who die in infancy and childhood go to heaven. They pass from the care of earthly friends into the far more tender care of angelic guardians and teachers. The guardians of the infants are those who, in their earthly life, most fully developed this sweet disposition of loving most to labour for those who were the most helpless. Their hearts were full of childward sympathies ; with this affection, derived from the infinite reservoir of the Divine Love, their souls still thrill ; it is their ruling love, and it indicates their special use. These angels are of the female sex. As many of these infant new-comers as their love can inclose, and their cares can compass, are entrusted to them : their use and joy are heavenly, for they watch over the development of the young souls entrusted to their care with more than maternal solicitude.

"The final home of these tender lambs of the flock of the Good Shepherd is the highest, the celestial heaven ; for not having actually committed sin, by the voluntary adoption into life, and against the monitions of known truth, of their hereditary predispositions to evil, they are

among the innocent; and in heaven the innocent are the highest of all angels. Because the Saviour was the spotless, the innocent one, He is termed the LAMB OF GOD; and the lambs of His flock are the innocent ones, whether of infant or adult age, whom He gathers home to Himself."

"The idea is fitting and beautiful!" I exclaimed. "Do these children for ever remain children?"

"No," replied Sophos. "Childhood is the sign of mental and physical immaturity; but in heaven all become mature. The ordinary appearance of angels who attained to adult age in the natural world is that of men and women of about thirty years of age. Those who have grown up in heaven remain for ever younger in appearance than others: that is the distinction between them."

"Then the American poet was right in his idea," I observed. "Speaking of a child who had died in childhood, he says:—

'She is not dead—the child of our affection,—  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,  
And Christ Himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,  
She lives, whom we call dead!

Day after day we think what she is doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.

. . . . .  
Not as a child shall we again behold her;  
For when, with raptures wild,  
In our embraces we again enfold her,  
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,  
Clothed with celestial grace ;  
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion,  
Shall we behold her face.''' \*

"The sentiment is charming and the thoughts are true," rejoined Sophos. "As the child advances in maturity of body and mind, he passes from the care of his first guardian to angelic teachers, who instruct him increasingly in the wisdom of heaven. When he becomes adult he marries, and the newly-married pair have their own abode. The bud that merely blossomed on earth fully blooms into unfading beauty in heaven."

"Oh, Sophos!" I exclaimed. "Tell me, if all who die in infancy are saved, why does God select some, and leave others? Why does He not take those whom He foresees will lead lives of sin, and will finally be lost? Why is it that some who seem to give promise of being brightest, wisest, and fairest, fall, while so many of the rugged and coarse are spared? Why is it that the children of so many who could provide for their every want, teachers for their minds as well as food and raiment for their bodies, are snatched away, while the children of the dunghill and gutter are suffered to remain? The heart of many a gentle Rachel mourns for the darlings of whom she has been bereft, while offspring of sin, surrounded with examples of vice, doomed to physical squalor, intellectual starvation, and moral contamination, are permitted to live. Why is there such a seeming contradiction to the truth that God intends human happiness, and strives by His providence to secure it?"

The eyes of Sophos beamed with tenderness and intelligence. I had arisen from my seat in my eagerness, and he seemed to touch my shoulder with his hand,—a

\* Longfellow, *Resignation*.

touch which thrilled and melted me. In a voice of solemn and rolling melody he answered me. "My friend, God never intended the death of a child. It is a subversion of the Divine Order that any child should die in infancy. Children who inherit from their parents physical health, who are brought up under healthy conditions, and who have sufficient to supply their bodily wants, live; they do not die. The seeds of physical weakness and disease which are planted in the very constitutions of children, and which cause them to fade away like poisoned flowers, are consequences of human sin, not necessarily the sins of the parents, but of many generations and of the race. The terrible epidemics that sweep across wide districts of the earth, and cut down these sweet blossoms in the gardens of human love, could never have been were it not for sin. The frightful conditions under which human beings live, inviting disease and beckoning death, are proofs of evil working with ignorance to slaughter the little ones. Children die by God's permission, not by His appointment. Not only do not the wicked live out one half their days, the fatal heritage of premature decease descends to their children. Obedience to the laws of health, which are laws of God, prolongs human existence as well as enhances human happiness. One of the blessings promised to the new and more glorious state of the Church of the future is that 'there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man who hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old' (Isa. lxxv. 20). Had not sin entered into the world, the stream of life from generation to generation would have remained pure, and premature death from disease, 'the terror that walketh by night and the arrow that flieth by day, the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noonday,'

would have been unknown. It is a merciful arrangement of Divine Order, meeting the new circumstances which sin introduced, to receive all these little ones into heaven !

“You ask, Why is the selection? Inasmuch as God never appointed the death of children, He does not make the selection of those who shall live or die. The selection is made by the universal and impartial law of nature, the survival of the physically fittest to live : the grounds of the selection are physical and not moral. They die in whose organisms the germs of disease lie hidden, and who come into such physical conditions as can develop those germs : they die whose frames are delicate and fragile, and who cannot battle through the ailments and troubles of infant life : they die whose nurses and attendants are careless or ignorant, or both ; who are ill-fed, insufficiently clad, unsheltered ; who are not physically strong enough to resist the inclemencies of the treatment to which they are subjected, or who are subjected to treatment more cruel and exacting than others. Spiritual laws operate into and co-act with natural laws, and so soon as, from whatever cause, the body ceases to be a vessel capable of receiving and reacting against life, it ceases to live. God makes no exceptions, on moral grounds, in the operation of His physical laws ; for they, too, are His laws ! He provides moral compensations for all physical afflictions ; but the integrity of both the spiritual and natural universe demands the unvarying and impartial operation of His laws.

“Even were it otherwise,” continued Sophos, “it is evident that all could not die in infancy, or the earth would become depopulated, the human race would perish. The world’s work has to be done, and men and women must survive to do it. Who shall survive? The



physically fittest ; for, so far as the world is concerned, they must be the most useful and the most productive. Under the operation of the marvellous law, the transmission of hereditary qualities, a man or woman can arise, descending through the line of a morally tainted but intellectually gifted ancestry, who is fitted to do work, to receive and teach truth, to achieve artistic, legislative, industrial, or commercial triumphs such as none other could accomplish ; and whose uses in the great economy of life will extend into the spiritual world, and be there rendered eternal. It is true that all children who die go to heaven, and the highest heaven, yet the uses which they are fitted to perform there are far less various and diverse than those for which they are fitted who live to adult age, who realise the innocence of wisdom, and ascend, matured in mind and experience, into their heavenly place. It is not well for any one to lament that they were not taken from earth in infancy or childhood : it is not well to lament too deeply or continuously for those who are. Those who live are preserved for wise ends ; those who die, die for wise ends. It is the highest wisdom to trust while we submit : whether we trust or not, submit we must ! Who can tell what would have been the lives and characters of those who pass from the world in infancy, had they survived ? It may be that mercy and providence is operative here !

“One thing is certain, to have had children who are now in heaven is a blessed privilege. Such have given up angels to God. All their sweet and tender memories, all their yearning affections, all their soaring hopes, are as golden cords let down from heaven, drawing and still drawing their souls to the Lord. The spiritual equilibrium in which they stand is weighted on the heavenward side. Their children are eloquent though silent preachers of

righteousness to their inward ear and heart. Angel fingers beckon them upward ; and angel voices are waiting to welcome them when they, too, must go hence. They can look across the grave where the bodies of their little ones lie buried, and with their tear-blinded eyes can behold the promise, 'Ye too shall be with me, where I am, and where I have garnered these little ones from the sultry heat and the blast of the winter storm.' Death is only an appearance to those who survive : the angels see life in it, and nothing but life ! ”

“ Thanks, Sophos,” I said. “ This should bring comfort to the souls of those who are bereaved. The labour of teaching these neophytes of heaven must be full of satisfaction, and its own exceeding great reward. But what are the studies which such children in heaven can pursue ? ”

“ Your question shall be answered presently,” rejoined Sophos. “ We have not yet done with the uses performed by angels in the World of Spirits. There are gathered multitudes from the natural world who are

#### “THE HEATHENS IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS.

“ These are they on whom the light of the Gospel has never shone. These, again, are also divisible into two great classes—the good, those who have lived in accordance with the measure of light they had received while on earth ; and the evil, those who, measured by their own light, were self-devoted to their own lusts. The process of judgment with regard to both these classes is exactly similar to that we have already described.

“ Two great principles need to be remembered in regard to these : they must be judged by the measure of light which they possessed ; and yet only by coming to

know and love the Lord can any among them be saved.

“They must be judged according to their measure of light. As we have shewn you, judgment is not an external process, but an unveiling of the real state of every spirit; consummating in the vastation from those whose ruling love is good, of all relatively external fallacies, falsities, and infirmities; and from those whose internal ruling love is evil, of all their knowledges and appearances of wisdom. Hence there is no condemnation attaching to ignorance. Yet true knowledge, and an extensive acquaintance with Divine truths during the earth-life, are invaluable blessings; by their means the soul has opened within it more interior planes into which it can receive fuller states of love, it becomes prepared for more exalted uses, and is rendered capable of richer measures of joy. Heaven itself is the marriage in the soul of goodness and truth: according to the multitude of the soul's intellectual and affectional possessions, so is the joy, the interiority, the exaltation of its heaven. The process of teaching truth to those who already love goodness, or of uniting knowledge to the states of love which the soul already really possesses, takes place in the World of Spirits. Hence good heathens can there learn to know the Lord: the good affections which they have felt and still feel, and which their lives have evinced, form ‘the good ground’ within them, into which the seeds of Divine truth may be sown. The sowers of these seeds of Divine truth are angels, who in this use are the instruments of the Divine Sower.

“There are two modes in which truth can be acquired: from *without*, by the instructions of those who are wise, by the continual exercise of the perceptive faculties, and by the external presentation of new objects

on which those faculties can be exercised ; also from *within*, by meditation, and by the influx of light and activity from the Lord into the reasoning intelligence of the angel, both of which rearrange, as it were, the mental forms already received into the mind by the use of the perceptive faculties. Of both these modes of acquiring knowledge, spirits and angels avail themselves. But in their earlier states, spirits need the external way more than the internal ; for the rudiments of all knowledge are primarily derived from without. Hence the good heathen need to be taught the truths of the Gospel externally, in order that the knowledge thus exteriorly obtained may afterwards develop and fructify within them.

“ It will not, therefore, be a surprising thought to you that there should be

#### “ ANGELIC PREACHERS IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS.

“ The preaching of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost resulted in the addition to the Church of three thousand souls : in the World of Spirits, such a scene may be continually witnessed.”

“ Are those preachers eloquent ? ” I asked.

“ If by eloquent you mean dexterous in fine phrases, too often calculated to draw the attention of their hearers from the truths that they utter, to admire the magniloquent way in which they express their ideas, I answer that they are not eloquent,” rejoined Sophos. “ If by eloquent you mean that the truth shines in their understandings, and the love of truth burns in their hearts, that their words are winged as with eagle’s pinions to dart into their hearers’ souls, that the sublimest poetry adorns their presentations of truth, that the speaker

grows absorbed and his self-hood seems lost in the consciousness of the grandeur of the truths that he utters, that for the time he is but the mouthpiece of Divine Wisdom flowing through him into the listening multitude, making them to so forget the speaker in the effort to drink in his meaning, that they would never think of asking themselves whether he was eloquent or not—if such is your meaning, I answer angelic preachers are eloquent. Yet is there an endless diversity of styles among angelic preachers, and each one speaks only when, and so long as the Lord gives him a message to deliver. Theirs are exalted uses, yet by no means the most exalted. They all belong to the spiritual kingdom, in all the angels of which the intellect predominates over affection. Nor is theirs the most exalted wisdom : this belongs to the angels of the celestial kingdom, who love God and goodness above all things, and thence immediately perceive truth. In preaching, Divine Truth has to be accommodated to the diversified states of the mixed multitude who hear ; hence there can never be such heights or depths reached as when, in full sympathy, a teacher and a learner may together endeavour to explore the principles and phenomena of the Divine operations.”

“ But as to language: do all spirits and angels speak the same language ? ” I asked.

#### ANGELIC LANGUAGE.

“ Yes,” replied Sophos. “ Yet there is a diversity, not so much in the sounds, as in the wisdom of the thoughts conveyed thereby. Speech with the angels is the expression of ideas : the extent of the perception of the meanings of what may be said depends on the state

of the hearers. This, however, in some measure, is true of all language; for vocal sounds only call up in the mind of the hearer the thoughts with which such sounds are habitually associated: new arrangements of vocables occasioning new associations of old ideas in the minds of those who listen. In heaven there is also the most thorough economy, both of effort to hear and to understand the meaning of what is spoken, and likewise of speech. A phrase there signifies and conveys more wisdom than could even be expressed in earthly language. And further, inasmuch as the faces of the angels are transparent with the light of truth, the meaning of speech is marvellously enhanced by facial expression, by gesture, and by all the surroundings of the speaker. His inward thought projects itself into outward visibility, and he stands encompassed about with the temporary embodiments and illustrations of the meaning he would fain convey."

"Is my seeing some of the statements of the Word an illustration of this idea?" I asked eagerly.

"It is not for me to explain the process by which you see," gravely rejoined Sophos. "We are here as teachers, and you as a learner. When our task is done, you will seek to recall us in vain."

"I wish not to understand what is not fitting you should teach me," I replied. "Enough for me is the privilege of learning."

"Say not privilege," rejoined Sophos, "for that may easily savour of self-love and gratified ambition: say the *responsibility of learning!* We teach, it is our use: you learn, it is your preparation: you may teach, it is your possible use. To receive in order that we may give is the universal duty; to banish every idea of self-merit in either receiving or giving, this also is the duty of all. In

the clear perception and acknowledgment that the only real Giver is the Lord, no room is left for indulging any self-assertive thought, or for self-congratulation, which is but selfishness thinly disguised."

### § III. WHAT DO ANGELS DO IN HEAVEN?

"Sophos, your reproof is wise. I am willing to learn," I said. "Is there anything more you wish to tell me concerning the ministry of angels in the World of Spirits?"

"We have said enough on that subject," replied Sophos. "We may next think of what angels do in the heavens. Dokeos will first speak to you of the divisions and distinctions of the heavens."

#### ARRANGEMENT OF THE HEAVENS.

Dokeos began :—

"Paul spoke to the Hebrews of an 'innumerable company of angels.' An innumerable company they must indeed be, if we remember the millions who have come from the earth, and from all the other earths in the universe. Hence one of the titles of God is 'the Lord of Hosts,' or Armies. But an army is the very reverse of an indiscriminate throng; order is evinced in every arrangement, and enforced in all the discipline. Order is the great law of heaven; it proceeds from the Lord, who is Order itself. A system of arrangement in heaven among the angels is, therefore, inevitable. They are not all alike in character, or in use, or in relation to each other and to all. Do angels worship? Some must stand or sit in front of others: some must lead the

worship, and others must follow. Do they chorus praises to the Most High? There must still be order and distribution of parts. Even were all heavenly choruses to be sung in unisons, there must still be differences in the character, quality, and range of the voices. Do they hold deep councils together concerning the eternal mysteries of the Divine nature and purposes? There will be the wiser and the less wise, the presiding intelligence, the most tender heart. When the Saviour sat at the table on which His last Supper was spread, only two could sit next to Him, one on either side. There must, therefore, be order and arrangement in heaven: to deny this would be to assert an absurdity, viz., that there is disorder there."

"Which no one would assert," I remarked.

"The Scriptures also indicate the existence of such necessary distinctions," resumed Dokeos. "In the parable of the pounds (Luke xix. 12-27), the Lord declared that it should be said to him who had increased the one to ten pounds, 'Have thou authority over ten cities;' and to him that had increased his one to five pounds, 'Be thou also over five cities.' This does not mean that the saved in heaven shall be distributed into cities, and that 'the faithful over a few things' are to be the rulers over the number of cities named. The 'cities' mean the knowledges of goodness and truth which the servants of the Great King had gained by their faithful service; their authority over these 'cities' denotes their spiritual possession of, and power over, such knowledges. Yet the parable intimates the idea of distinctions and differences of state among the saved, and, therefore, implies that there is a system of order and arrangement among them.

"Paul also intimates the same necessary fact. He



says, 'I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago —whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth — such a one caught up to the third heaven' (2 Cor. xii. 3). There are, then, *three* heavens; thus implying farther distinctions, and a still more complex system of arrangement. The same writer intimates to the same church, in his earlier epistle, that there are three degrees of heavenly glory, and also an indefinite variety in each degree:— 'There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead' (1 Cor. xv. 41, 42). A similar idea of difference and distinction is expressed by Daniel (xii. 3):— 'They that be wise [teachers] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.' The three-fold gradation of glory is further implied in the parable of the sower:—The seed that fell on good ground brought forth fruit in some *thirty*, some *sixty*, and some an *hundred fold* (Matt. xiii. 8). This power of spiritual productiveness indicates the degree of glory thereby realised. The same idea of threefold gradation is taught where the Lord declared 'He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward' (Matt. x. 41, 42). To receive a prophet means to accept every heavenly truth; to receive a righteous man means to accept every good affection; to give a cup of cold water to the little ones means to re-

fresh the holy principles of innocence born of the Lord in the soul. The reward is to be graduated according to the state of its recipient; they who can receive much will receive much; they who can contain but little will be filled.

"So again Paul evinces that in the oneness of the Christian Church an endless diversity of gifts was possible, 'but the same spirit;' 'differences of ministration, but the same Lord;' 'diversities of operations, but the same God.' Hence he likens the Church of Christ to a body having many members, each with its appropriate character and function, and of the whole of which the Lord is 'the head' (1 Cor. xii.)."

"You have given proof enough, Dokeos," I observed. "There must be distinctions, and consequently there must be arrangement, subordinations and co-ordinations in heaven. How do you describe these?"

Sophos replied to me. "The universal and invariable law of aggregation in the spiritual world is affinity—those who are likest are nearest, the less like are less contiguous, the least like are the most remote. This law provides, consequently, that the arrangements of heaven shall be according to *character*—the one great principle which underlies all true classification. We have previously seen that the reception and appropriation by human beings of the Divine Love or Wisdom constitute heaven as a state of life or character. Hence, the first great distinction which prevails in heaven is the radical one of genius: accordingly as either the affectional nature or the intellectual nature preponderates, so angels are arranged. We term this genius, this hereditary and inevitable bent of the soul, in which the will predominates over the intellect, the *celestial* genius; and the other in which the intellect predominates over the will, the

*spiritual* genius. All the heavens are correspondingly divided into two KINGDOMS, specifically the *celestial Kingdom*, and the *spiritual Kingdom*. These Kingdoms are to the heavens correspondingly as the two sides of the human body : the left can never become, and can never desire to become, the right side. So, representatively, the men of Judah and the men of Benjamin (*son of the left hand*) may unite most intimately, but the ones can never become the others. This division of the heavens into two kingdoms gives a spiritual significance to all the passages in the Word in which the right and left sides, or hands, are mentioned, the *right* representatively denoting the celestial, and the *left* the spiritual kingdom. The angels thus distinguished may dwell in the same heaven and on the same plane, for angels of both genius exist in each heaven.

"The second class of divisions is as to the heavens. The ground of this distinction is still in the character of the inhabitants of each heaven. Some have the basis of their Christian life in the principle of *obedience* : they submit to the Divine Will, because it is His Will ; and seek to do His commandments, because God has enjoined them. Of such are the inhabitants of the *lowest heaven*, this state being the lowest in which Christian life can exist. Another great class have the foundations of their Christian life in the *love of truth* : these constitute the angels of the *spiritual heaven*. A third great class have the ground of their Christian life in the *love of goodness* : these are the Johns of the Gospel, who lean on the Lord's bosom, whom the Lord is especially said to love, because their deep ruling and abiding affection is love to the Lord. These constitute the angels of the highest, the first, the *celestial heaven*. These distinctions are both real and permanent : they exist in the very character of

the angels: they determine the arrangements of the heavens.

"The third class of distinctions is as to the uses which each angel can perform in the heaven to which he belongs. This distinction is still founded in character. According to this distinction, all in each heaven are gathered into societies; and thus is laid the basis of social life in the heavens. The position of each angel in the society to which he belongs is still determined by character, it being relatively more or less interior according to *his* capacity and his reception of the Divine life, which flows into and animates all.

"Thus the Divine dualism is represented in the two Kingdoms, and the Divine Tri-unity is exemplified in the three heavens; and this, again, is pictured in the three-fold classification of all the saved into kingdoms, heavens, and societies."

"It is a most comprehensive system, Sophos," I rejoined. "Can the angels of one society mingle with those of other societies?"

"Freely," replied Sophos. "And, indeed, of necessity they must mingle in the mutual performance of uses. On each plane, association is altogether uninterrupted."

"Can the angels of the lower heaven rise to a habitation in one of the superior heavens?" I asked.

"No," rejoined Sophos. "Nor do they ever desire to do so; for the joy of each angel is full. Yet all the heavens are continually progressing in wisdom and goodness; the plane of life in each, however, for ever remains unchanged. As an illustration of my meaning, conceive of a triple helix, or ascending spiral, the base of which rests on the earth, the top of which extends upwards towards God. The place of each soul on either of the ascending spiral threads is determined on earth by its

advance in the regenerate life. When he dies his plane is fixed: he will for ever continue to ascend, but his course of progress will for ever be on his own plane, whichever of the three it may be. There is constant communication between the societies on the different planes by influx, and also by personal intercourse between temporarily ascending and descending angels; but inasmuch as all reception of heavenly life is according to character, and inasmuch as the groundwork, the foundations of character, are laid during the earthly life, each angel is perfectly content and supremely happy only when on his own plane, and in his own place on that plane. Joy is according to character, and the joy of each cannot be more than full."

"Is there any earthly analogue of this system of arrangement?" I inquired.

"Yes," responded Sophos. "The body of man is such an analogue. It consists of inmost, interior, and exterior parts, all conspiring together in the performance of the uses common to the whole; each remaining definitely distinct, while performing its specific function in the general human economy; all animated by one soul, and living from the same respiration and arterial circulation. In the sight of God, all the heavens are as to their uses as one grand colossal man; the whole is blended into unity by the immediate influx of life and light and love from Himself into every unit of this great aggregate, and also by mediate influx from one heaven into the other. The result is, that the three heavens constitute a united whole, and are all kept in connection, from the First Cause to the ultimate effects, so that nothing which is not in such connection can be found; for whatever is not connected with the First Cause by intermediate links, cannot subsist, but is dissipated and falls to nothing."

## ANGELIC GOVERNMENT.

"This order and arrangement, however, must necessitate innumerable functions of governing and directing," I remarked. "Must I conclude, then, that such governing uses are performed by angels?"

"Undoubtedly," rejoined Sophos. "Government is a use of ministration, which is performed by those who are best suited to it. The government of heaven, therefore, like that of the World of Spirits, is a true *aristocracy*, the rule of the best. The rulers most fitly serve by ruling; for it is their use. Yet in heaven there is no personal ambition, for there there is no selfishness: each would fain prefer another before himself. Yet all can perceive the appropriate use of each angel, and each takes the place and discharges the duty for which he is truly fitted. Inasmuch as God has never created two minds that are exactly alike, there can be no contest for the performance of any one use, and there is also an indefinite variety of uses, thus adding continually to the perfection of each heaven."

"Have the governors any superior state to that of the governed?" I asked.

"They have the reverence as well as the love of those whom they govern; and the external things by which they are surrounded are the exact correspondences of their condition and functions," rejoined Sophos. "In the performance of their use of governing, such angels represent the Lord, who is the sole source of all authority, the King of Kings, as well as the Lord of Lords. They have palaces, thrones, attendants, appropriate robes of office, garlands, and crowns. They provoke no envy, and have no rivals. They are in their use as truly as the lowliest attendant is in his use. All serve: the only

difference between the angels is in the form and method of their service. The greater the number of those whom any one serves, the more laborious and arduous is the service; the servant of all is the ruler over all. Power is a Divine attribute; those who receive of it in heaven exercise it divinely. They realise the Lord's words, 'Let him who would be the greatest of all be your servant.' Jesus was the greatest of all, because He was the servant of all."

"Are the rulers and governors of heaven those who were rulers and governors on earth?" I asked.

"It by no means follows," rejoined Dokeos. "Earthly rulers, even when competent to rule, too often seek power for its own sake, or for the sake of the gratifications of pride which the possession of power affords, or from the lust of wealth, or even for the sake of sensual indulgence. These affections are infernal. Those who desire power only that they may do good, and use their power only for the promotion of the public welfare, are born inheritors of power: their earthly life is a training for the eternal exercise of authority in the heavens. There are many great captains of industry, as you term them, constitutionally leaders and rulers of men, who are fitting themselves by their earth-life for posts of high influence in the heavenly system of society. Thousands possess the splendid faculty of organization, who, in their earth life, had no opportunity for its exercise; but who, in the heavens, find their real place and their most fitting use. The uncrowned kings of earth will find in heaven their eternal crowns. The crowned subjects of earth will there sink to their proper place and use. The joy of all and the good of all will be secured by such a distribution of uses. He who serves by ruling is content thus to serve: they who serve by subordinate uses are content thus to

serve. The ruled recognise the gift of God in the rulers: the rulers recognise the gift of God in the ruled. So also with the teachers and the taught, the leaders and the led, the preachers and the hearers, those who minister and those who are ministered unto. The taught would no more dream of attempting to teach their teachers, than would the governed desire to rule over their governors. Knowing that there must be governors, who could they desire other than the fittest, and of whose fitness to preside every one is fully able to judge? If one fitter to govern any society should ever appear, the previous governors would be the most willing to retire, and thus to make room for his better performance of the use, which would only enhance the perfection of the society, and consequently increase the blessedness of all its members."

"Theirs is a glorious use!" I exclaimed.

"Theirs is, doubtless, an important use," rejoined Sophos. "Yet the angels who perform this use are by no means the highest. Like the preachers, the rulers are all of the spiritual kingdom; for it is truth or wisdom that governs and rules: the Lord is King by virtue of His Divine Wisdom, and the Great High-Priest by virtue of His Divine Love. The angels of the celestial kingdom are higher, because they are in more interior states than these rulers: they are, therefore, the less fitted to govern. Martha was cumbered with much serving; the rule of the household at Bethany was exercised by her; yet Mary had chosen the better part, which should not be taken from her. They however whose use it is delight in it: others, whose state is possibly far higher, would weary of its cares, and their hearts would speedily recoil from its delights. The great law of heaven is, that use which each is most fitted to perform is to each soul the most glorious, because the most delightful. To each, conse-



quently, any other use would be burdensome and irksome, imparting a sense of contrariety, and therefore of constraint. The heavenly ambition is to do well the duty which devolves on each, in order to subserve the good of all; the rulers in the heavens share this common ambition, and by ruling well they realise it."

"Would that we had such governors on earth!" I exclaimed.

"There are a few such in every nation," rejoined Sophos; "and they are the salt of the governing classes; they keep from utter corruption the social economy of every people. In the times which are dawning their numbers and their influence will increase. In the proportion that the Divine Master rules 'whose right it is to reign,' shall those govern to whom pertains this peculiar character of mind, and whose earthly use it is. As the influx of light from heaven pierces into the minds of men, intrinsic fitness to govern will be discerned and recognised; the influence of political empirics will be diminished, and not only righteousness, but also the right men will rule."

"We are slow in discovering such," I observed.

"The patience of the Lord is infinite," rejoined Sophos. "Men have to work out in freedom their whole salvation, to learn in the school of experience the lessons which experience alone can teach, and by truth to attain to wisdom. Enough for you to be satisfied that in the grand gyre of existence, the whole future course of mankind will tend upward; and that earth shall continually grow more like heaven. The struggles will be many and terrible; but the set of the tide of life is now definitely toward the attainment of what is interiorly good, the realization of what is absolutely true."

"God grant that this be so!" I sighed.

"Amen!" responded both Sophos and Dokeos most solemnly.

#### WORSHIP IN HEAVEN.

"Have they worship in heaven?" I asked, after a slight pause.

"Yes," replied Sophos; "and they have places of worship, priests, preachers, choirs, and forms of service, all of which vary according to the states of the worshippers."

"Places for worship?" I asked. "Are there churches or temples in heaven?"

"There must be temples in heaven," replied Sophos, "for we read of the saved, who had come 'out of great tribulation,' that they are before the throne of God, and *serve Him day and night in His temple*, and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them' (Rev. vii. 15). The day and night here spoken of are not such as are known on earth, which, by rotating on its axis, occasions a succession of day and night; as by revolving around the sun, it occasions the succession of seasons. The 'day' means a state of full perception and activity; the 'night' signifies a state of relative obscurity and rest. 'Serving God in His temple' spiritually signifies the continual acknowledgment and unceasing worship of the Deity in the temple of His Divine Humanity. But this acknowledgment and this interior service lead the angels to occasional associated worship; and for the purposes of associated worship edifices are necessary; and inasmuch as all things in heaven are representative of Divine things, the temple of the Divine Humanity is represented by the temples or edifices in which angels worship."

"What, then, is the character of these temples?" I asked.

"They differ in each heaven, and also in each society. The temples in the spiritual heaven are more ornate than those of the celestial heaven. Some temples are tabernacles of palms and groves of trees. Every element in the temples, however, is representative, a divinely conceived allegory wrought out into what seems like stone or wood. Heavenly plants, which are significant as well as beautiful, are made to twine around the capitals of the columns in far greater perfection than does the lotus, the acanthus, or the lily around the capitals of columns made by man. It was from heaven that the old builders received their ideas of the massive and the stately, the graceful and beautiful. Moses was permitted to see in the Mount the patterns which he was commanded to imitate in the tabernacle: what he saw objectively with his spiritual eyes, other originators of architecture saw subjectively by the eyes of their understanding: Moses saw clearly what they only dimly and with laborious effort conceived. Yet the original of all beauty and order is heavenly; the idea, whether actually seen or conceived in the mind, has descended from heaven, and it descends from heaven only because such an idea is concentered there. You need not ask whether the styles of such temples be Gothic or classic; they are of all styles, of which indeed earthly styles are no more than faint types and adumbrations. A temple is the fixed embodiment of four ideas, —beauty, stability, harmony, and worship; but these four and all other ideas are everywhere represented and embodied in heaven."

"A modern poetess has said of a splendid temple, it was 'music frozen into stone,'" I observed.

"The figure is apt and graceful," rejoined Sophos.

"It illustrates what I mean by beauty, stability, and harmony. To it needs to be added the further idea of worship. Hence heavenly temples are not only places for worship, but also places provocative of worship. The wise ones of the heavens discern in every form a representative type of something which exists in the highest temple of all, the Divine Humanity of the Lord. Their lordly proportions typify His majesty; the radiance that streams down into them from God figures the fulness of glory with which the Divine Humanity is filled; their roofs are all diaphanous, to show that true light comes only from above; the jewellery with which they blaze represents the wondrous diversity of Divine truth; the self-kindled and ever-burning fires upon their altar symbolize the unceasing glow of the Divine love; their chancels front the east, so that all who enter may gaze on the Sun of Righteousness; they are permanent concretions of the idea of worship, and types of the august Being whom in heaven all worship and acknowledge as their Saviour, Father, Lord!"

"Who are the builders?" I inquired.

"The Lord, operating through the states of the angels," rejoined Sophos. "But this operation is twofold in character, an immediate and objective production of things which correspond to the states of will and thought of the angels, typified in the things which surround them; and also the production of external objects by means of the angels themselves, who therein act as voluntary agents, striving to fix into objective visibleness their own conception of spiritual things. Of this latter mode of production we shall speak presently, when we come to reflect on the arts in heaven."

"Are there periodic times for worship?" I asked.

"As I have already said, there are no days and nights

in heaven, such as on earth, 'there is no night there;' and there is no time there. Instead of the successions of time, there are successions or changes of state. The gates of the temples are never shut: in any state, any angel may enter therein, and bow down before the Lord. Yet there are states which periodically recur, and which impel the angels to unite in worship. During such states worship is richest; the augmented number of worshippers intensifies the sphere of worship, and the worshippers reap the recompence in internal peace, light, and joy."

"And the forms of worship?" I inquired.

"Vary according to the character of the angels in each heaven, and in each society; and likewise according to the then present state of the worshippers," said Sophos. "Worship in some societies is overpoweringly magnificent in outward pomp and ceremony, with splendidly robed priests and acolytes, gorgeous processions, clouds of incense, wonderful choruses of song, blazing pillars of light representatively streaming down from God Himself, and multitudes of the heavenly hosts visibly bending towards the transparent roof of the temple, audibly joining in the praises of the worshippers. All that the loftiest dream of the Christian dramatist ever conceived of the possible in worship, the open communion of higher and lower intelligences, the meeting-place of God and man, crowded with all images which could typify the soaring of human aspirations toward the Highest, and the coming down of the Divine Spirit over and around the worshippers, are, at such seasons, far more than realized. In other societies, worship is simpler in form and more interior in character: the angels bow in the solemnity of silence, and inwardly receive of love and light from the great Giver of good, who eternally metes out to each soul according to its ability to receive."

"Judged, then, according to a heavenly standard, either an æsthetic or a simplistic form of worship is equally right," I observed.

"Equally right, and equally accepted by the Lord," replied Sophos. "The mode and form are only accessories to worship; the essential is the spirit in which worship is entered upon and conducted. When the soul offers the best and highest of which it is capable, it can do no more: to offer less would be to rob God. To some, what you style 'æsthetic' forms of worship would seem wholly out of harmony with their perception of the Divine character, and of the true attitude of a worshipping soul. To others, what you style 'simplistic' worship would seem bare, meagre, and impoverished. In the heavens, there is room for all good men; and there is ample scope for every variety of form by which the worshipping soul may approach the Lord. Just as all forms of government are best for those whom they best suit, so every mode of worship is best to those to whom it best expresses the idea of worship, and seems the most fitting embodiment of the spirit of thanksgiving and praise."

"I thank you, Sophos," I exclaimed. "This must be true. Then they pray in heaven?"

"Yes," rejoined Sophos, "they pray in heaven. But having had all remembrance of sin wiped out of their consciousness, and being purified from all dispositions to evil, the prayers of angels admit of no confession. Supplication and thanksgiving are alone heard there. Heavenly prayer, therefore, is for spiritual blessings only; for growth in love and intelligence, in submissiveness and obedience; trusting implicitly to the Infinite Wisdom to mould all external things into harmony with His will, and the best interests of His creatures."

"And the priests pray, and the preachers teach," I observed musingly. "Have they anything like the Holy Supper in heaven?"

"They have that of which the Holy Supper was the earthly type and promise,—‘the wedding-supper of the Lamb,’ the internal reception of goodness and truth, of love and wisdom from the Lord, to close the evening of each state, so as to renew them for the next. This feast, like all heavenly ideas, is also rendered objective; and their feasts of love are to them the perpetual supper of an ever-renewed marriage-union between their souls and the Divine Bridegroom, the Lord. Then is fulfilled in them the Divine promise, ‘I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s Kingdom’ (Matt. xxvi. 29).”

"There must, therefore," added Dokeos, after a pause, spent by me in meditation, "be a large variety of angelic employments connected with associated worship, which indicates another answer to your question, ‘What do the angels do?’ It is with priests and preachers, as it is with rulers, and, indeed, with all in the heavens, the angel whose use it is performs each specific duty; each comes into his place and does his work; all serve; and in his meed of service, by enhancing the happiness of all, each secures his own."

"Would that I were there!" I exclaimed.

"Friend!" said Sophos, and the word thrilled and melted me, "to be where the Lord appoints, to do what the Lord directs, to receive what the Lord gives,—this is the only wisdom. The highest angel feels himself to be most thoroughly his own when He most fully submits Himself to the Lord. Whether on earth, or in the World of Spirits, or in heaven, the place where each is, is the best that his state will permit. It is his present

place; to wish to change it would be to lose the present in dreams of the future. Human existence is actually only in the *Now*, and the *Here*; when the *Then* and the *There* become to the soul the *Now* and the *Here*, they will belong to the soul. Use well the *Now*, act well in the *Here*, and the changes of place and the mutations of time will all be cared for in the providence of Him to whom there is no great or little; for whom nothing is too vast or too insignificant; who presides over the destinies of the universe, and counts every hair of the head; who feeds the perennial fires of the sun, and lights the torch of the glow-worm; and who, in the midst of the chorus-ing praises of all the heavens, can hear with infinite pity the wail of the humblest child that suffers and mourns. Genuine worship is the doing of the will of God; men may worship Him everywhere, because everywhere they can do His will."

#### TEACHING IN HEAVEN.

"You have spoken of teaching in heaven," I remarked; "tell me of this."

"There are two joys connected with Divine truth," said Dokeos, "the joy of perceiving or knowing, and the greater joy of communicating knowledge. Both these joys are realized in heaven. All these continually grow wiser for ever. Yet the progress of angels in knowledge is gradual; for though eternally advancing, the intellect of angels is only finite. Were it not gradual and successive, the advance in knowledge could not be eternal. A rate of progress being inevitable, it is likewise inevitable that some advance more rapidly than do others, or in some directions, or as to some subjects. There must, therefore, ever be the wiser and the less wise, not only as



to general knowledge, but also as to the knowledge of particular subjects. Hence comes the possibility of instruction ; and, indeed, its necessity. The great distinction between the genius of Christianity and the genius of worldliness is that the one enforces the principle, GIVE, the other, the motive, GET. The law of heaven is the law of giving, as the Saviour enunciated it, 'Freely ye have received, freely give!' The angels delight to obey this law, and it is one of the delights of the wiser to teach, as it is ever the delight of the less wise to learn.'

"I can see that there must be differences of wisdom among the angels," I observed. "Those who have enjoyed instruction for thousands of years must be wiser than they who are relatively new-comers into the heavens. Adam must be wiser than the newest-born angel."

"Progress in knowledge, however, is, as I have said, according to genius or character," continued Dokeos ; "for character dominates and determines all things in the heavens. In this respect it is in heaven as on earth, each soul pursues the line of study to which he is attracted by natural aptitude, and advances most rapidly along that line. There is, however, this difference between earthly and heavenly knowledge : on earth many errors are mistaken for truths, many follies and falsities for wisdom ; in heaven, this is impossible. There, knowledge may be imperfect because deficient ; but the false is never accepted as the true, just as the evil is never mistaken for the good. So far as each sees, each perceives the truth, the difference of perception is in degree."

"Then there are varieties of subjects of angelic study?" I asked. "Can you enumerate some of them?"

"Certainly," replied Dokeos. "The great science of heaven is *Theosophy* : the angels unceasingly endeavour to learn more of the wisdom of God. But the wisdom of

God is displayed in all things which He has made : hence the sciences of heaven take cognizance of all His works. Hence Theosophy is the science which includes, formulates, and avails itself of all sciences. Every natural science has its spiritual side, analogous in all respects to the earthly science, of which, indeed, the spiritual science is the heavenly prototype. All things of the natural universe are only effects produced by spiritual causes, just as the natural body of a man derives its existence from his spiritual body. They whose delight it was on earth to study the science of *effects*, can, in the heavens, study the science of *causes*. Earthly science is obliged to hypothesize causes, and hence come a thousand errors ; heavenly science discerns and classifies causes, and thence perceives and comprehends effects. But, further, as the Great First Cause of all secondary causes is infinitely wise, and inasmuch as His infinite wisdom is manifested alike in every operation, and as the finite percipient can never comprehend the infinite wisdom of God, eternal progress is possible along the line of any one subject of angelic study.

“ The studies are various,” continued Dokeos. “ There is, for example, an astronomy of the heavens, that strives to comprehend the ever-shining sun of the spiritual world ; that seeks also to understand the sun and moon and stars which representatively may be found in human souls ; that endeavours, above all, to discern the connection between these effects in that universe and the Great First Cause of all. To know the nature of the mediate forces which lie behind all the galaxies of the natural universe, maintaining systems moving at vast distances, with immense velocities, and operating on each other, and with defined powers of attraction and repulsion ; to understand how they were first initialed out of the Divine

thought, and fixed as material forms in a universe of matter ; to perceive God in the continual act of creating, to trace His methods, and even to assist as secondary operators in such tremendous results ;—here is range enough for the mightiest intellects that earth has seen, and who, during their earth-life, felt driven by a Divine impulse to the study of such themes.”

“Range enough,” I answered. “And geology?”

“In heaven is seen to be a twofold thing. The geology of the natural world is representatively mirrored in man’s nature ; as, indeed, all heavenly science recognises the radical relation existing between the human things in man and the material things in nature. Every heavenly scientist, therefore, is *perforce* a student of man. But the substances of which the floor and ground of heaven itself are composed do not less display the unutterable patience of God, working through ages for the destined end, than do the *strata* of earth : they indicate order and succession, the changes of development, for in heaven whatever has been is never wholly destroyed, traces remain, and to track these traces is the work of the heavenly geologist ; they lead him at once to the better understanding of heaven, of the nature of angels, and of the operation and character of God. Surely, we may here discern an eternal scope for the exercise of powers of investigation, and for the realization of active delight from the pursuit of such knowledge.”

“Ample scope, Dokeos,” I said. “And mathematics?”

“Are there no numbers, forces, and forms in heaven to supply subjects for a heavenly calculus?” demanded Dokeos. “Is God less the great Geometer in the adjustment of causes than in the arrangement of effects? Myriads of new applications of mathematics must be possible in heaven, which is a real world, full of substan-

tial forms, illumined by light emanating from an actual sun, and every production of which world is truly the subject of heavenly law operating in heavenly order as natural things are subject to natural laws. The science of effects in the material plane can be rigorously understood only by means of mathematics ; the science of heaven, which includes the knowledge of both causes and effects, will need the same intellectual instrument. Let me impress the idea on your memory : inasmuch as there must be a cause for all natural effects, and the spiritual world is the cause-world, there must be a spiritual analogue of all natural science. Hence there is a spiritual physiology, which shall include the spiritual bodies of the angels, the relation between the anatomy of that body and the anatomy of mind, the arrangement of heaven itself, which is but a reduplication, on a grander scale, of the human form ; and also the resurrection-body of the Lord. There is a zoology of heaven, the laws which underlie the production in heaven of animated types of the affections and thoughts of angels, and also the production on earth of animated forms. The formation of animals will there be investigated from the higher standpoint of cause and law, instead of by the more toilsome and less fruitful process of generalizing effects in order to thence deduce laws. In like manner, there must be a botany of the plants that bloom in the paradises of heaven ; a biology of spiritual life received into angelic forms, emanating according to fixed principles from the sole Source of all life ; social statics pertaining to the societary organization of angels ; dynamics of spiritual forces ; optics of angelic vision ; hydrostatics of the rivers and fountains of the water of life ; pneumatics of the atmosphere which angels breathe ; heavenly acoustics ; and in the study of all these sciences the explorers will investi-

gate not only the heavenly facts and laws which these sciences will collate and classify, but also their representatives in the lower plane of nature, as likewise in the intellectual plane of the spiritual constitution of the angels themselves, and finally in the character of God. Dwelling in the realm of causes, they will reason from cause to effect as to all natural things, and from effects to the First Cause as they trace up the origin of all they behold."

"The enumeration overwhelms me, Dokeos," I exclaimed.

"Students of theology, specifically so called, have in heaven their never-ending fields of labour and research," continued Dokeos; "for there will remain for them the eternal paradox of necessity and liberty, angels seeming to themselves to exist from themselves, while yet they are only recipients of life; the origin of evil, and the changes it introduced into the economy of heaven; the wondrous ways of Divine providence; the nature of redemption, the process by which Jehovah became incarnate, the process by which He glorified the humanity that He assumed, its relation to His Divinity, the mode of the twofold operation, the eternal consequences of the union and its influence upon angels, as also on men. God will still be their study, both in the abysses of His Deity, and in the methods of His manifestations. The Sun of Righteousness is nearer to them and larger, its light is clearer, and their sight is keener than is the case with man; yet the angels will for ever 'desire to look into these things,' and will never be able to fully fathom out the infinite depths of Divine love and wisdom which such investigations will disclose. In such *arcana* of heavenly wisdom the preachers of heaven are high teachers, and their hearers grow wise and humbled as they listen and learn."

"That must be true," I remarked.

"From science, let us turn to history," resumed Dokeos. "Think you that the heavens have no history, or that it is unworthy of study? If so, angels must have lost their memories, or the events of heavenly life must have no interest for the new-comers. Human histories are composed partly by means of digging into the uncertain quarries of old writers, or the compiling of traditions, and partly by the exercise of a reasoning imagination: heavenly histories are written in the memories of eye-witnesses of the facts which they narrate, who saw without liability to err, and who repeat without the possibility of deception. Earthly histories can compass only a few thousand years at most: the memories of the angels extend far back into the incalculable past. Millions of them are capable of teaching: millions more must be desirous to learn. The archives of heaven surely must furnish wondrous stories of angelic communion, the inter-relations of societies and heavens; the varying characters of successive additions to the societies, or the formation of new societies of heaven; the increase in social perfection by the institution of such new societies; their varying operation into the World of Spirits, and the correspondingly diversified operation of the Divine Spirit into the heavens themselves; the uses each angel has individually performed along the ages, and how the societary use has been built up by constant increase and by continual development. It may be permitted to them occasionally to relapse into their external memory, at least sufficiently to remember the part they took in the affairs of the earth on which they began to exist; and their recollections may become a means of contrast with their present state, so that from their old and earthly standpoint they may turn and survey their now exceeding

height. The true biography of every one of the angels would form a marvellous story, and there are countless myriads of angels! Both their inner and their outer life are full of activity; each suggests a history, for each embodies one. The neophytes of heaven are eager learners; well may they rejoice, for they find in the heavens innumerable multitudes, each angel of whom will ever delight to teach!"

"And their methods of teaching?" I asked.

"Are adapted with heavenly precision to the capacity of each learner," replied Dokeos. "Some are taught representatively, as in living pictures or tableaux, the things they need to learn. Some are taught by set discourse; some by private conversation; to some are given problems to work out; while to others access is open to the written wisdom of the heavens."

"There is, then, writing practised in heaven?" I asked.

#### WRITING IN HEAVEN.

"Surely this idea cannot surprise you," rejoined Dokeos. "If the Word exists in heaven, it must be written; and the Psalmist declares that it is for ever settled in heaven. Turn to the Scriptures. John saw in the spiritual world a book written within and on the outer side, and sealed with seven seals (Rev. v. 1). Ezekiel saw there 'a man with a writer's ink-horn by his side' (Ezek. ix. 2); he also saw that 'a hand was sent unto me, and lo, a roll of a book was therein, and he spread it before me, and it was written within and without, and there was written within lamentations, and mourning, and woe' (Ezek. ii. 9, 10). Such a roll was also seen by Zechariah (v. 1, 2). The handwriting on the wall of the palace of Belshazzar might convince you that in the spiritual world the art of writing is not un-

known. The finger of God Himself wrote the ten commandments on the tables of stone given to Moses. On the gates and foundations of the New Jerusalem were written the names of the tribes and of the apostles. In addition to the book of life, the internal memory of each soul that is judged, there were other 'books opened' (Rev. xx. 12); and the angel who came down from heaven clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was on his head, whose face was as the sun and his feet as pillars of fire, had 'a little book in his hand' (Rev. x. 1, 2).

"It certainly cannot be said," continued Dokeos, "that there is anything derogatory to the idea of angelhood to suppose that they should sometimes desire to write, or be able to give effect to their desire. It may, perhaps, be imagined that the angels are above the necessities which writing would imply: if so, where is the proof? Instruction must certainly be given: must all instruction be given orally? Surely some principles of heavenly wisdom may be too profound to be all at once grasped or remembered, and which the neophytes would desire should be written objectively, and which, therefore, would be written, either immediately from the Lord, or mediately through the voluntary instrumentality of the angels themselves. Angels are not all-wise, nor are their capacities all equally powerful. Though indescribably superior to earth's wisest, purest, and best, their ability to learn and to retain is not unlimited. The problems with which they grapple are proportioned to their intellectual powers, and such a help as writing may supply, or such a means of communicating angelic wisdom to less wise ones as writing could furnish, must surely be within their reach and not unworthy of their use.

"Besides," continued Dokeos, "there are, as, if you will consider the matter, you will see that there must be, poets in heaven. All there are poets; but in heaven, as



on earth, there are some into whose open and receptive souls down-streaming intelligence enters, and assumes this orderly and beautiful form. The art of poetry, like every other art, in its highest aspects is Divine. Shall all the poetry of heaven be preserved mentally only, or only be sung or recited to a group of rapt listeners? There are heavenly lyrics: the angels sung 'a new song;' John heard 'the song of Moses and the Lamb.' Is this the only form by which the poetic faculty of angels shall express itself? Is it impossible for an angelic Shakespeare or Goethe to produce a heavenly drama? Was the genius of Dante extinguished when he entered into the realities of which he had conceived previously? Is it profane to believe that Homer or Virgil, Milton or Tasso, transplanted to heaven, may there produce epics as far superior to their earthly compositions as heaven is higher than the earth? The idea of there being angelic psalms and hymns easily falls within the sphere of your thought; the sweet singers of Israel when raised to heaven will still continue to sing; but psalms and hymns are only modes and forms of poetry. The poetry of heaven is surely as diversified as that of earth. There is love in heaven; there is married love in heaven; such love there ever retains its virgin freshness; and virgin love ever transforms the lover into a poet! Of course dirges, and requiems shall there be unknown; the tragic muse shall no longer conjure up its visions of suffering and sorrow; but angelic love, angelic insight into character, angelic contemplation of the scenery of heaven, and angelic meditation on the universe of God, will supply to their poetry never-failing and appropriate themes. Poets on earth are men and women who have been gifted by the Lord with keener insight, tenderer hearts more melodiously tuned than others: it would be little and

belie heaven to imagine that in their transit to the higher world earth's purest and sweetest poets should lose their noblest gift. If, then, there are poets, it is inevitable that there should be written, as well as spoken, poems and lyrics in heaven.

"But if poems are thus written," continued Dokeos, "surely graver and more scientific themes which are congenial to minds of a severer and more powerful character, may also be treated in writing; angelic biography, and the history of heavenly societies, may also be thus treasured; and in this way, as I said, the written wisdom of angels, the literature of ages of angelic life, may come to be studied by the less wise learners whom the more wise teach."

"The argument convinces me, Dokeos," I replied. "But writing necessitates writing materials; whence do they come, and how are they produced?"

#### THE ARTS IN HEAVEN.

"Many of them spontaneously, by the creative operation of God acting through the will and thought of the angels," rejoined Sophos. "They will to write, and the materials are there; they will that the materials shall become permanent, and both materials and the writing remain; they will that both shall disappear and cease to be, and both writing and material vanish away. Writing in heaven is not the tedious and wearisome process which it is on earth; for the external surroundings of the angels are in perfect and instantaneous harmony with their internal state of will and thought. Their powers of production are proportioned to all their other powers in intensity, extensiveness, and rapidity of execution. I can only afford you a statement of the fact: you can

comprehend hardly anything of the process. On earth, owing to the fixity, the comparative immobility of matter, results are attained only by means of slow and laborious processes of manufacture : in heaven there is neither time nor space ; to think of a person is to see him, of a thing is to behold it ; to love is to be present with the object beloved ; to will a thing is to possess it ; to will it to be diverse from what it was before is to change it ; to desire its absence is to secure its departure ; to wish for it again is to obtain its reappearance. This creative power in its infinite fulness exists supremely in God ; all things that exist are the concretions of His Divine will and thought. Somewhat of this creative power is communicated from the Lord to the angels ; and, if you will consider it, somewhat analogous to this is likewise possessed by man on earth. Even on earth man's will and thought transform, modify, develop, and, so far as form extends, create things. The chief difference between the power as exercised by men and angels is to be seen in the substance on which each operates. Man deals with relatively inert, immobile, and fixed substances, termed *matter* ; he has, therefore, to operate on matter, not solely according to the laws of mind, but according as those laws of mind are restricted and limited by the laws pertaining to matter.

“ Hence by slow processes, availing himself of natural laws, he can erect cities on the grassy banks of a river, change wildernesses into a garden, increase the natural fertility of the soil, people pastures with modified forms of domestic animals, convert pigments into pictures, bridge the ocean with floating palaces, and girdle the world with telegraph wires ; he can move into juxtaposition things not previously so related, and the result is his creative or productive triumphs. In heaven, how-

ever, the laws of mind are all-powerful and solely operative ; the substances of heaven are all subject to those laws, for it is the spiritual world ; they are, consequently, altogether subservient to the will and thought of the angels, and are dependent thereon. Such states as are permanent or habitual with them are permanently illustrated in the external things which surround them ; such as are only transient are temporarily illustrated ; of such as vary the illustrations or representatives vary, and this, too, whether the things have been spontaneously produced through them, or voluntarily produced by their active agency. Do I make my meaning clear ? ”

“ I understand your meaning,” I replied. “ Please proceed.”

“ On earth,” continued Sophos, “ men are surrounded with two classes of objects, the things produced directly by what is termed Nature, and the things which have been modified, or even produced by human art. The permanence of these things depends on the course of nature, and the renewed application of art, arresting the decay, which is rendered inevitable by the very laws of nature, which assert that change shall pass upon all things. But human art is the result of active states of will, thought, and operative ability which men have experienced : God, operative everywhere, has been pleased to form or modify His creation according to the new terms imposed upon His operation by the exercise of human wills, thoughts, and executive power. He has thus permitted to man a share, and no unimportant share, in the production of earthly things. In like manner, in heaven, God surrounds the angels with the things of Nature,—‘ Nature,’ that is as itself manifests in heaven,—and He, likewise, permits to the angels an analogous share in the production and modifications of the things

which are external to them. Human art has, therefore, its analogue in angelic art, just as angelic science is the heavenly analogue of earthly science. The difference in the substances, conditions, and laws of the two worlds being remembered, the old axiom is true,—‘Whatever exists on earth in an earthly manner exists also in heaven in a heavenly manner.’”

“It is a most comprehensive conception, Sophos,” I answered. “What arts are practised in heaven other than that of writing?”

Dokeos replied to me. “Let us, in the first place, think of music, and of what it comprehends. Whence comes the wondrous ability to catch the inner harmonies of things, and so to write them down as that others may enjoy their possession, and reproduce their chords? From God, the All-harmonious; through the heavens, where harmony reigns. This glorious gift seems to link its possessors already to the angels. Can you conceive that the great composers of earth should, in their transit to the spiritual world, lose the mysterious faculty, or the desire for the delight which is produced by its exercise? Must not their faculty be wondrously augmented and exalted as they listen to the pealing symphonies of heaven, where the love of music is possessed by all, and all are capable of enjoying its productions? Must not earth’s ablest composers find in heaven still greater masters of this holy art, and among the disciples of whom they will rejoicingly enrol themselves?

“Every idea of heaven includes the idea of music,—harpers playing on golden harps, and the sound of trumpets long and loud. Is this music merely inspirational, inbreathed as an impulse into myriads, who, without previous discipline or preconcert, play different instruments, or sing their various parts in the full-voiced har-

monies, just as the birds pour spontaneous praise? Or is it not more reasonable, more human, and more ennobling to think, that they whose special endowment it is to receive this effluence of Divine love are first among their fellows in this respect, and that the Lord supplies to them their appropriate use in teaching, training, and leading the vast choruses of heaven? There is order in this, as in all other matters pertaining to heaven; and because there is order, progress, development, and increase in perfection are possible and certain. Birds cannot combine their melodies into harmonies, nor can they develop and increase their powers of song. Their warbled notes are called song only by a metaphor; birds whistle, man is the only being who can sing! The capability of improving beyond the limits of all present conception extends to the musical faculty of man, as to all others; and in heaven the faculty, possessed on earth in its initial and initiatory stages, will go on increasing for ever. Heavenly lyrics will be sung by heavenly soloists, and angelic choirs will pour forth angelic anthems in the hearing of rejoicing multitudes of angels, who will recognise and reverence the gifts of the poets and the singers, just as they will recognise and reverence the gifts of all the rest. Both the words and the airs of sacred oratorios come from heaven: the words are chiefly taken from the Divine Word: the music is the dim and faint echo of heavenly harmony resounding in the soul of the composer, and registered by him as well as he was able, that others might also hear.

“Music is the beautiful as heard; it is love rendered audible. The highest human conception of beauty, and the highest human experience of love, fall far below the angelic standard; yet the human conception of beauty, and the human experience of love, are designed to be

preparations of human souls for the greater fulness of both, which the good will realise in the other world. Because thus preparatory, they are similar in kind, though different in degree. Hence in heaven instruments such as man never yet imagined, voices such as mortals never heard, orchestral arrangements such as never entered into the heart of man to conceive of, and harmonies beyond the apprehensions of earth's most gifted masters, express angelic gratitude, adoration, and love."

"I feel that this must be true, Dokeos," I rejoined. "Is the use of music confined to worship in heaven?"

"Its highest use is in worship; but this is not its only use. There are weddings and festivals in heaven, of the enjoyments of which music, both instrumental and vocal, forms part. There are also concerts there. Social life is sweetened and solemnized in heaven by music, and this far more richly than among the most cultivated on earth. Indeed, all pure and holy cultivation of God-given faculties which can take place on earth, is but a preparation for higher and better things in heaven. This is the sacred sanction given to all true cultivation, and should be its highest incentive.

"Angelic composers vary in their styles; there is bright and beautiful music there, as well as grand and magnificent; delicious domestic songs as well as anthems and oratorios; every orderly affection in heaven finds voice and bursts into melody, from the gladsome glee of children to the soaring adoration of heavenly hosts; the music is richly imitative, from the sighs of young lovers to the voice of thundering and of many waters."

"There is one earthly use of music which surely is not to be found there," I observed,—"the opera."

"Why not? A parable is a drama in the historic form: a drama is a parable in a dramatic form. Is the parable

whether written or performed, an unholy thing? Does the performing of a parable render it unheavenly? Is the histrionic art of infernal origin? And if verse may be recited with dramatic accompaniments, why may it not be sung? One of the means of angelic teaching is that of representation, or dramatic performances. The clumsy mechanism of the earthly stage fades into insignificance before the wondrous productions of the heavenly stage, where, as Sophos has said, formative laws operate through the will and thought of the angels. In some of the representative visions of the prophets angels and spirits performed their various parts, and events which were then in the future, became visibly rendered before the opened eyes of the seer. Were such dramas by such performers unlawful or improper? There is no machinery of instruction which can be rendered so efficacious as the stage. The perversions which it has undergone in the history of the world can be separated from its essential elements; they are accidental associations, not essential elements. Nor is it merely because of its capability of furnishing instruction that the stage is a good and useful thing; it can impart pleasure of an entirely innocent yet most vivid kind. Music, painting, manners, characters, poetry, can be united in stage representations, as nowhere else, to produce ineffaceable impressions, to excite noble sentiments, to illustrate great principles, and, I repeat it, to furnish pleasure. If your conception of heavenly life excludes the idea of pleasure, innocent gratifications of the soul's tastes, modify it at once, for you do heaven an injustice."

"May I ask, then, if there is dancing in heaven?"

"Again I ask, why not? Dancing is rhythmical motion," replied Dokeos; "it is joy expressing itself in bodily movements reduced into harmony with music.



Is dancing unholy? It used to be a part of worship. The women of Israel celebrated their deliverance from Egypt with timbrels and dances (Exod. xv. 20). Jephthah's daughter came to meet her father with dances (Judg. xi. 34); the women of Israel celebrated the victories of Saul and David with singing and dancing (1 Sam. xviii. 6); David danced before the Lord when he brought the ark from the house of Obed-edom (2 Sam. vi. 14); and the Psalmist enjoins the people 'to praise the Lord in the dance' (Psa. cxlix. 3; cl. 4). One of the signs of the joy of the people of God in their return to the state of love and faith, represented by the rebuilding of Jerusalem, was to be, 'Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel; thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of those who make merry. . . . Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance; both young men and old together; for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow' (Jer. xxxi. 4, 13). Dancing is the gesticulatory language of joy: hence says David, 'Thou hast turned my mourning into dancing' (Psa. xxx. 12). Surely the Lord did not condemn or prohibit dancing; for in the parable of the prodigal son, He describes the signs of joy of the household as consisting of 'music and dancing' (Luke xv. 25); and He makes use of it as the basis of a most terrible rebuke: 'I have piped unto you, and ye have not danced' (Matt. xi. 7). Life in heaven is not of a sad or sombre type; there is human joy of every variety, from the sprightly gaiety of orderly merriment to the soul's intensest rapture and ecstasy. Whatever fitly accords with such states, and whatever externally illustrates and represents such states, can be seen in heaven. There are the relatively wise and simple in heaven; but the wisest there are the

freshest of heart and most joyous, though their joy may be less demonstrative than the gladness of the more simple."

"While I am convinced of the probability of what you say, Dokeos," I remarked, "yet the idea of there being dramatic and operatic performances, concerts, and dances in heaven, will deeply shock the prejudices of the religious, to whom devotion seems only to mean austerity and devoutness."

"I can well believe it," rejoined Sophos. "The mental and moral atmosphere of the Christian Church has been made dark, and even poisoned, by the false ideal of religious life which has been set up. Men have erected a cruel, morose, and ascetic standard; transformed it into an idol, and felt ready to denounce, if not to persecute, all who refused to prostrate themselves before it. They have prohibited lawful and simple pleasures, crucified innocent dispositions along with their lusts, and fancied they honoured God by dishonouring themselves. God is the creator of every disposition of human souls, the giver of every faculty; there is nothing that is sinful in the faculty itself, the sin begins when its disorderly use begins. They might as well fancy they would serve God in mutilating the body, as to imagine that God is pleased with any crippling, mutilation, or repression of the soul. He rejoices in human joy. The Divine Father is glad in the gladness of His children.

"The Christian religion has been corrupted by being conceived of as ascetic. The Flagellants were possessed of devils. In the World of Spirits their quality and internal character is revealed: those who have practised the severest austerities inwardly burn with spiritual pride: they inwardly believe that they have acquired merit by reason of their self-inflicted sufferings, and seek to be

honoured as almost divine. The practice of reverencing as 'saints' such self-immolated victims of superstition has depraved the minds of Christians: the spirit underlying the whole matter, both as to the motive for the austerities and for exalting those who have practised them in the Church, is Babylon—"the lust of spiritual dominion!" It has pandered to an infernal craving for exaltation, and burdened believers with a host of unnatural models. Puritanism only gave a new direction to what Popery had agreed to endorse: in the one system, the few who had attained to an unnatural eminence were specially honoured; in the other system, what was possible only to a few was set up as a rule for all; religion was rendered morose as well as austere; and hearts that pretended to be overflowing with love to God proved their real state by being full of hatred to man. The whole was a slander against the All-beneficent, who has lavished beauty with profuse hands on the creation which He has made; who has uttered His protest against such futilities in the sportive glee of childhood, and in the frolicsome gladness with which He has endowed the young of all animated creatures; who has painted the flowers with beauty, and tinged with glory the morning and evening skies; who has in your climate decked the spring with garlands, ripened the glow of summer, scattered loveliness over the foliage of autumn, and made even winter charming with its fleecy covering of all-embracing snow. Sin has brought sorrow: the All-Merciful ever seeks to make His creatures forget sorrow in forgetting sin."

"Such teaching, Sophos, is a glad and joyous gospel," I exclaimed.

"It is truth, my friend," rejoined Sophos. "It may shock you even more to hear that there are sports and pastimes among the children who are taken from the

gardens of earth and transplanted into heaven ; feats of strength, agility, and skill ; that they not only play, but laugh ; that the wise ones of heaven smile while witnessing their happiness ; that the merriment of the youthful is a holy thing ; and that their mirth is, in reality, homage rendered by them to the august Being who fills their hearts with joy and gladness."

"It does not shock me, though it may startle many," I replied.

"In describing the joy of the blessed in that holy state of love and faith, represented by the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and its being reinhabited, the prophet declares, 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for multitude of days. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets' (Zech. viii. 4, 5). The old men and women denote those who are full of manifold experience ; their multitude of days describe the multitude of states through which they have passed ; the boys and girls depict the young perceptions and affections of human and angelic souls, and their playing portrays their joy and rejoicing of heart. There is more true worship," continued Sophos, "in guileless gladness and self-forgetful joy than in all self-conscious states of austere self-repression, self-mutilation, and self-immolation. The duty of self-denial is to deny to ourselves all that is evil ; the privilege of self-sacrifice is consecrating all one is or has to the service of goodness in the love of the All-Good."

"You convince as well as delight me," I said. "Let us now return to the arts in heaven. Dokeos spoke of dramatic performances combining painting as well as history and the histrionic art ;—there is, then,

## "PAINTING IN HEAVEN.

"I can easily perceive what an inexhaustible amount of instruction the stage might supply. History could there continually repeat itself before multitudes of learners, all eyes and ears in order to drink in impressions as to what had been thought and said and done. I should, however, like you to dwell a little longer on the idea of painting."

"Painting," replied Sophos, "is but one mode among many of communicating thought. Whatever be the means or vehicle of communicating to others the ideas which are communicated, the power is an art, and they who employ the means are artists. With some, the means employed consist of words; we call them orators, poets, authors. With others, the means consist of sounds; we call them composers and musicians. With others, the means employed consist of solid forms; we call them sculptors and modellers. Others employ buildings as their means; we call them architects. Others subserve themselves of pigments, and give us both form and colour; we call them painters. The idea which underlies all art is, not imitation, but embodiment in such a way as may both preserve and communicate to others the conception which was formed in the mind of the artist concerning the subject of which he thought. Hence art is a God-like thing. The Divine thought clothes itself with substance, and becomes embodied in either the spiritual or the natural world, or in both. The thing which exists is thus the presentation on the plane of its existence of the Divine thought, of which it is the out-birth: it is therefore the representative or correspondent of the Divine thought, which bestowed existence upon it

by calling it into being. In like manner,—though as far removed in degree as what is finite and derived is removed from what is infinite and original,—angelic and human artists seek to embody their thought in such materials as they have learned to control. God creates; artists produce: He forms the substances which embody His creation; they use substances created by Him which they can bend to their art. Their art is, as to its technical portion, the knowledge of, and the more or less perfect mastery over, the materials of which they subserve themselves; as to its ideal or intellectual portion, their art is to present to themselves and others their thought, and to leave this presentation of their thought as its representative and embodiment. Whether art exists in heaven or on earth, the philosophy of art is the same. Heavenly painters employ materials of which you can form no conception; the modes of their work, and the effects they produce, are equally above your comprehension; yet art is Divine in its origin, and there are painters in heaven."

"We can also approach the same subject from another point of view," added Dokeos. "The love of the beautiful is a holy affection. The desire to behold the beautiful is a heavenly desire. In heaven this desire is abundantly gratified. The angels are beautiful: each angel is the embodiment in form of the holy affection which he or she most cherished. Their habitations, their raiment, the scenery among which they dwell, are all beautiful. The faculty to perceive and the ability to portray such beauty are derived from God, who desires that all should possess these powers, and who to this end has endowed all His rational creatures with some love or taste for art. Painting a scene is more than mere copying the scene; it is the depicting of the idea of the scene which the

scene conveyed to the mind of the artist. Thus every picture adds something of the artist's own to the scene he paints, and which could be added to it by none other than he. It renders an impression which otherwise could only be fleeting a fixed and permanent thing; as permanent, that is, as the vehicle in which he works, in order to express and convey his idea. The faculty and the desire to exercise it having come from God, they cannot be destroyed by death: they must continue to exist in angelic minds. The delight to the artist, and to others who gaze upon the productions of his art, being a pure and holy thing, it is heavenly; and whatever is heavenly must be possible in heaven. Hence pictorial art is possible in heaven; there are painters there. Music and eloquence are not the only heavenly arts, the only means of conveying thought and of exciting emotions in heaven. As Sophos has said, what words are to the orator, and what sounds are to the musician, forms and colours are to the painter—vehicles of thought. Were painting impossible in heaven, then to those who have loved to paint, heaven would be a privation; lessening, not increasing, their happiness. The grace of form and the glow of colour may be seen in heaven, not only in God's creation, but also in those representations by which angelic artists have sought to imitate the handiwork of God in their own manner, transfused with their own character, and embodying the idea which they received from the objects at which they gazed with admiration and love."

"Then art-culture, on its noblest and best side," I remarked, "must be, so far, a preparation for heaven."

"True," rejoined Sophos, "and the case is the same with all forms of culture. No soul is complete without the love of the beautiful: no education is perfect which

has not drawn out this characteristic of the mind. Would the All-Good have been so prodigal of beauty in His creation, if He had not designed His rational creatures to perceive, to appreciate, and to delight in it? Would the Great Artist have implanted in some souls the special faculty of art, and the desire to exercise it, if He had not intended it to be exercised?"

"No," I answered. "To imagine the contrary would be to reject Nature's revelation of the purposes of God."

"All God's gifts have respect to eternity, for He is the Eternal. Time, indeed, is only the earthly fragment of the soul's eternal existence. What the soul possesses it retains: what it delights in it will for ever desire and will be able to realize. Earthly art, therefore, is the earthly foretaste of heavenly art, just as earthly science is of heavenly science," resumed Sophos. "Heavenly art, however, is far more diversified in range, in manner, in materials, in durability than is earthly art. There the painters paint because it is their love. Variety but adds to the combined perfection; and detraction or jealousy, like envy, are unknown."

"But pictures involve exhibitions or galleries," I said, "private or public collections."

"The art galleries of heaven are as open to all as the temples," replied Dokeos. "None would think of possessing for himself or of retaining from others the slightest enjoyment which the beholding of a beautiful picture could impart. And in those galleries learners walk and work, each is led by the attraction of love to the selection of the style which each prefers, and the object of all is the common embellishment of their society and heaven. What they wish not to preserve ceases to exist; the most perfect alone remains. An earthly gallery can only include the artistic work of a few hundreds of years: who



can count the ages, examples of the art of which hang on the dustless, mothless, incorruptible walls of the galleries of heaven?"

"And with the old artists themselves still living and working, and able to explain their own works," I exclaimed. "Oh what a glorious school must be there!"

"All earth's wisest and best, developed in heaven into being wiser and better, are there for teachers," replied Dokeos; "and all earth's most receptive are there to learn; and the process shall advance for ever!"

"The thought confounds and oppresses me," I said. "When I think of the masterpieces of earth, and remember after what a small number of years of self-education and development they were produced, and with what refractory materials; and then think of the best of these great masters advancing along centuries and millenniums of practice; retaining all their earliest freshness of imagination, their keenness of vision and power of insight, their splendid enthusiasm and poetic fervour; enriching their labours with manifold experience, and working with heaven's own tints, what art-miracles may we not expect from them! If their earthly conceptions of the angelic were so wonderfully beautiful, what must not their heavenly portraits of angels be? But," I added, "does not the Divine law against making graven images, and the likenesses of things in heaven or on earth, traverse this glorious notion?"

#### THE LAW AGAINST GRAVEN IMAGES.

"The law forbids such fabrication of images for the purposes of idolatry," rejoined Sophos; "certainly it does not prohibit all art. It was given to a people prone to idolatry, and the purpose and reason of the law in the

letter explain the law. Yet God consecrated to the use of both the tabernacle and temple the highest art of which the times were capable. The art of the goldsmith, the jeweller, and the embroiderer, was sanctioned and sanctified in making the things of the tabernacle 'according to the pattern' which had been shown to Moses in the Mount. The winged cherubims over the mercy-seat, the cherubims embroidered on the inner curtains, the knobs and flowers and almond-like bowls of the candlestick, and the sacred name written upon the high priest's crown, were so many illustrations of art, dedicated to the service of God. Indeed, the skill of Bezaleel and Aholiab is declared to have been an inspiration of God: 'I have called Bezaleel . . . and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber to work in all manner of workmanship. And behold I have given him Aholiab . . . and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee; the tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy-seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the tabernacle, and the table and its furniture, and the pure candlestick with all its furniture, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt-offering with all its furniture, and the laver and its foot, and the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priests' office, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense for the holy place: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do' (Exod. xxxi. 1-11). God had given this specialty of wisdom to

these men for the performance of their special uses. He claimed the merit of their genius as His own !

“ The use of the arts in the erection of the temple of Solomon is even more marked. The cherubims of olive-tree wood ; the carved figures of cherubims and palm-trees and open flowers on the walls and doors of the oracle, and on the doors of the temple ; the pomegranate capitals of the brazen pillars constructed by Hiram of Tyre, with ‘ lily work ’ on the top of the pillars ; the twelve oxen on which the brazen laver stood, with ‘ flowers of lilies ’ on the edge ; the lions, oxen, and cherubims with which the border of the laver was enriched ; the lions, cherubims, and palm-trees engraved on the ledges ‘ according to the proportions of every one,’ —these were so many instances of art, sanctioned, sanctified, and accepted by God for the purposes of worship. Nay, even as was the case with Moses, who ‘ saw in the Mount ’ the heavenly patterns of all that he was to make for the tabernacle, so the Jewish historians affirm that David saw ‘ by the spirit ’ the patterns of the temple (1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 18, 19). But if art is thus sanctioned when dedicated to the service of the Lord, to produce artistic works cannot be a contravention of His Divine law. If art models were made visible to Moses, must not art exist in heaven ; and if one form of art exists in heaven, why not all forms ? ”

“ I have no reply to offer, Sophos,” I answered.

“ The Lord’s gifts are not for time only,” resumed Dokeos ; “ they are eternal. The Bezaleels, Aholiabs, and Hiram of mankind will find uses suitable to their genius in heaven as well as on earth. Their genius was a spark struck off from the Divine fire that vivifies and irradiates all. It is God’s gift to them ; given that it may be exercised, that it may be developed by exercise,

that its partial development on earth may form a base of preparation for its far higher and fuller development in heaven. The substances of heaven on which their moulding art shall be exercised are at once more plastic and more enduring than those of earth ; just as the genius by which they will be able to conceive shall be more productive, and their skill far more executive than is the case on earth. The sculptor shall there model his conceptions of beauty, and fix them in a material surpassing the diamond for hardness and brilliancy. The architect shall there design and construct edifices befitting the glories of the New Jerusalem, the temples, and galleries, and meeting halls, and museums, and concert-rooms of angelic societies. Sages will teach wisdom by means of written and spoken words ; musicians will inspire delight by sweet sounds ; painters will instruct and charm ; sculptors and architects, and artists in metals and precious stones, will add their quota to the general edification ; landscape gardeners will arrange and adorn the paradises of heaven ; every work shall embody angelic thought and express it ; all that is beautiful, whether in the immediate productions of the Creator, or in the modifications of that creation by the derived art and skill of angels, shall be possible and perfect in heaven ; nothing shall be banished save that which 'loveth and maketh a lie.' All that is beautiful and good came from God as their only origin : heaven is the place where the beautiful and the good have their myriad-form embodiments, and every embodiment is their triumph."

"You compel me," I said, "to remember Milton's suggestive words—

'What if earth

Be but the shadow of heaven ; and things therein

Each to other like, more than on earth is thought !'

I also remember the thought-prompting words of Sir Thomas Browne—‘The severe schools shall never laugh me out of the philosophy of Hermes, that this visible world is a picture of the invisible, wherein, as in a portrait, things are not truly, but in equivocal shapes, and as they counterfeit some more real substance in that invisible fabric.’ A similar idea is likewise expressed by Barrow: ‘What we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably otherwise exist in a higher degree.’ Many others of the wiser ones of earth, from Plato to Lord Bacon, have more or less clearly seen the analogies which the eternal and heavenly must bear to the earthly and transient. And now I bethink me, Paul himself states that the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things which are made, even His eternal power and Godhead (Rom. i. 20). Oh! if it be true that the clue to this relationship is ‘Correspondence,’ and that the Science of Correspondences, of which you have said so much, is indeed the lost ‘key of knowledge,’ great is the gain of those who have begun to understand, and have learned to apply it!”

#### EARTH A PORTAL OF HEAVEN.

“You are right, my friend,” rejoined Sophos, “the *Science of Correspondence* is indeed the ‘key of knowledge’: it unlocks the mystery of ages, the real relationship existing between the earthly and the heavenly; it opens the treasures of the Divine Word, and discloses at once the law of creation, the principles of life, the inspiration of Scripture, and merciful purposes of the Infinite

Wisdom. Once, all wise men possessed this teacher of wisdom : since then, a few have dimly perceived that it exists and have vaguely groped after it ; the time will come when he who is ignorant of this science shall no longer be accounted wise !

“ But let us return to our former theme. Had sin not entered into the world, the earth would have remained altogether the portal and threshold of heaven : all human faculties would have been angelic, in an incipient, a rudimentary state. The beautiful gifts of the Great Father to His children have been tainted and soiled by sin ; but in heaven the taint and the defilement are abolished ; the gifts alone remain. Their capacity of development also remains, for this capacity exists inherently in the gift. Opportunities for the exercise of the gift are of necessity implied in the bestowal of the gift. The joy that can alone come from producing those things, for which the gift was conferred in order that they might be produced, is a pure and holy joy ; it is a God-like joy, and will for ever be possible in heaven. All culture is anticipatory and predictive : while enlarging the faculties of production and appreciation, it predicts to those faculties an endless increase ; it anticipates for those cultivated abilities an ever-increasing enjoyment. Religion embraces and includes all cultivation of human powers, interfusing into all of them the love, and worship, and service of God. In this way religion is the link of union between the Most High and the humblest, and, at the same time, the process of preparation by which men are fitted for heaven.”

“ Oh, that so broad and generous a conception of religion had ever been cherished ! ” I exclaimed.

“ The times are ripening, my friend,” said Sophos, so

gently, so sweetly, and so confidently, that his words sank into my soul as a prophecy, which compelled me to believe in its truth ; "and men will grow wiser and clearer-eyed. The full reach of Christianity has not been attained, but the perceptions of men are widening. No hand can stem the inflow of the tide, and the tide has risen, and will still continue to rise. Possess thou thy soul in patience !

"The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of uses," he resumed, after a pause. "Whosoever has not the love of use, so as to delight in rendering service and ministration to others, has yet to gain the very initiament of the heavenly life. The perfection of heaven arises from the endless diversity of uses performed by the innumerable hosts of angels. Every genuine use is heavenly, and will be performed in heaven. For each use each worker is specifically adapted by genius and inclination, by aptitude and taste. In the performance of such God-appointed and God-rewarded uses each finds his abiding delight. Because all genuine uses are harmonious, their performance tends for ever to exalt the perfectness of heaven, and the happiness of all. The angels, therefore, are an ever-augmenting company of loving and mighty intelligences, who are seeking unceasingly to become individually and socially the embodiments and illustrations of the splendours, perfections, powers, and joys of the Divine nature—God's will realizing itself in their wills ; God's wisdom becoming embosomed in their minds, and ordering all things within and around them for their fullest good ; and the Omnipotence of God working into and through them, so as to construct the noblest manhood and womanhood in their individual souls, and to form a perfect society out of innumerable units. By their eternal

increase in numbers, in love, light, life, purity, excellence, and peace, shall be fulfilled the hope-inspiring prophecy, —‘ *Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.*’

“Dokeos,” concluded Sophos, “our task is done !”

THE END.





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